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**THESIS**

**ANALYZING UKRAINE'S PROSPECTS FOR NATO  
MEMBERSHIP**

by

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Ukraine has a résumé of achievements in its relations with NATO since 1991. However, at the 2008 Bucharest Summit, the NATO Allies chose not to offer Ukraine a Membership Action Plan. This thesis examines Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership, and investigates the hypothesis that Ukraine's membership aspirations are most affected by two sets of independent variables – internal and external. The two key internal variables that affect the prospects for Ukraine's accession to NATO are public opinion and domestic politics. The majority of Ukrainian society opposes Ukraine becoming a member of NATO, while political discord within the Ukrainian government may also limit the likelihood of Ukraine's accession to NATO. The two main external variables affecting Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership are Russia and NATO itself. Russia adamantly opposes NATO membership for Ukraine, and may apply economic, social or political pressure against Ukraine if its government continues to pursue membership against Russian wishes. Regarding NATO, it appears that some Allies do not believe Ukraine is ready for membership, while others do not wish to provoke negative Russian reactions.

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**ANALYZING UKRAINE'S PROSPECTS FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## ABSTRACT

Ukraine has a résumé of achievements in its relations with NATO since 1991. However, at the 2008 Bucharest Summit, the NATO Allies chose not to offer Ukraine a Membership Action Plan. This thesis examines Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership, and investigates the hypothesis that Ukraine's membership aspirations are most affected by two sets of independent variables – internal and external. The two key internal variables that affect the prospects for Ukraine's accession to NATO are public opinion and domestic politics. The majority of Ukrainian society opposes Ukraine becoming a member of NATO, while political discord within the Ukrainian government may also limit the likelihood of Ukraine's accession to NATO. The two main external variables affecting Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership are Russia and NATO itself. Russia adamantly opposes NATO membership for Ukraine, and may apply economic, social or political pressure against Ukraine if its government continues to pursue membership against Russian wishes. Regarding NATO, it appears that some Allies do not believe Ukraine is ready for membership, while others do not wish to provoke negative Russian reactions.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

NATO-Ukraine relations formally began in 1991, when Ukraine became a founding member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), which became the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in 1997. In 1994, Ukraine became the first Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) member to join the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP).<sup>1</sup> As long ago as 1997, Tor Bukkvoll, a Norwegian scholar, wrote that “Ukraine is giving high priority to participation in the PfP program and is considered to be one of the most eager participants.”<sup>2</sup> The Ukrainian military has participated in notable PfP operations such as: “Cooperative Osprey,” “The Shield of Peace,” “Cooperative Neighbor” and “Sea Breeze.” Also, Ukrainian peacekeepers were active in the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) operations in Bosnia, and Ukrainian troops are participating in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) operation.

The relationship between NATO and Ukraine was strengthened through the “Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine,” signed in 1997. Furthermore, a “NATO-Ukraine Action Plan” was adopted in 2002, and an “Intensified Dialogue” on membership was launched in 2005. The current Ukrainian government is actively pursuing a “Membership Action Plan” (MAP), and has stated that NATO membership is one of its goals.

Despite this résumé of achievements and the membership aspirations of the current Ukrainian government, it may be several years before Ukraine is admitted into the Atlantic Alliance. Despite the Alliance’s statement in the April 2008 Bucharest Summit

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<sup>1</sup> John Kriendler, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, July 2007), 2. Available from [http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/cee/07\(23\)JK.pdf](http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/cee/07(23)JK.pdf) (accessed 12 January 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Tor Bukkvoll, “Ukraine and NATO: The Politics of Soft Cooperation,” *Security Dialogue*, vol. 28, no. 3, 1997, 364.

Declaration that Ukraine will eventually become a member of NATO, there is a possibility that membership will never be offered to Ukraine. The objective of this thesis is to analyze the prospects for Ukraine's membership in NATO.

## **B. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES**

This study investigates the hypothesis that the prospects for Ukraine's membership in NATO (the dependent variable) will be affected by two sets of independent variables – internal and external. The two internal variables that affect Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration are public opinion and internal politics. The majority of Ukrainian society is against the idea of Ukraine becoming a member of NATO. As James Sherr, a British expert, wrote in 2006, "The public's changing mood on NATO has been carefully followed by Ukrainian media and think tanks, with the latest research showing that both ambivalence and curiosity regarding the organization are on the rise. However, half of Ukrainians still oppose membership whereas, depending on the survey, only up to 30 percent would approve of it."<sup>3</sup> This is a key factor limiting the likelihood of Ukraine's accession to NATO. Some experts consider the possibility of social unrest to be a serious threat to Ukraine today. Offering NATO membership to Ukraine, without public approval, could lead to protests. There are several reasons for the anti-NATO opinion polls in Ukraine, and they are discussed in this study. The Ukrainian government has been taking action to educate Ukrainians on the positive aspects of NATO membership.

The second internal variable is the Ukrainian political situation, which has been tumultuous since 1991. Political discord within Ukrainian society is a factor limiting the likelihood of Ukraine's accession to NATO. Ukraine achieved independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, and its political structure and democratic institutions are still evolving. Human rights controversies, economic setbacks, and rampant corruption have burdened Ukraine since the achievement of independence in 1991. The 2007

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<sup>3</sup> James Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine's Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, March 2006), 9. Available from [http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/cee/06\\_percent2814\\_percent29js.pdf](http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/cee/06_percent2814_percent29js.pdf) (accessed 12 March 2008).

Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Ukraine 118 out of 179 countries.<sup>4</sup> Events in recent years, such as the Orange Revolution and the dissolution of Ukraine's parliament, have demonstrated the instability of the political situation. However, Ukraine is showing signs of improvement in some areas. The Freedom House Nations in Transit annual study upgraded Ukraine to "free" in 2006. Ukraine is the first CIS state to achieve this recognition.<sup>5</sup> Further political reform will probably be necessary before Ukraine is offered membership in NATO.

The two main external variables affecting Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership are Russia and NATO itself. The Russian Federation is another factor limiting the prospects for Ukraine's membership in NATO, because Russia and Ukraine are closely linked. As Anatol Lieven has observed, "These links have not just been forged over the centuries by Russian, then Soviet, governments but have also developed 'organically' through millions of human contacts over hundreds of years, resulting in very important aspects of common psychology, religion, culture, language, and historical identification."<sup>6</sup> Russia is Ukraine's largest trading partner and energy provider. Many Russian leaders view NATO expansion with distrust, and they have publicly stated that Ukrainian membership in NATO will negatively impact relations between the two countries. Ukraine could face an economic and energy crisis if Russia decided to cut off trade and resources because of Kyiv's request for NATO membership. Also, according to Lieven,

Western intelligence agencies have expressed concern in the past that the Russians in Ukraine might secede or put great pressure on the Ukrainian state to enter a new union with Russia (for example, the U.S. intelligence community's 1994 assessment of Ukraine's political situation)...Russian officials for their part have privately threatened that if Ukraine takes a strongly anti-Russian stand in its foreign policies - for example, by

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<sup>4</sup> Janusz Bugajski, *Ukraine: A Net Assessment of 16 Years of Independence* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2008), 31.

<sup>5</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Reflections on NATO - Will Ukraine and Georgia Ever Join This Alliance?" *Kyiv Post*, April 2008, 18. Available from <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/oped/26493/> (accessed 22 February 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Anatol Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1999), 79.

seeking to join NATO - the Russian government will “activate” the Russians in Ukraine in such a way as to divide, weaken, and possibly destroy the Ukrainian state.<sup>7</sup>

In the foreseeable future, Russian influence will continue to negatively affect Ukraine’s NATO aspiration.

The other main external variable affecting Ukraine’s prospects for membership in the Alliance is NATO itself. To become a member, Ukraine must be unanimously accepted by current members. While some NATO members support Ukraine’s accession, particularly the United States, there are other members who do not support it at this time. Some feel that Ukraine is not ready yet; it still needs to develop its political, economic, and military institutions. Some members do not want to antagonize Russia. They realize the importance Russia places on Ukraine not becoming a member of NATO. According to Alexei Makarkin, an analyst at Moscow’s Center for Political Technologies, “Ukraine’s accession will most certainly provoke sharp anti-Western sentiments in the Russian elite and the public. The psychological injury will fan the siege mentality, which is only a step away from another, though slightly different, cold war.”<sup>8</sup> Energy dependence on Russia probably also plays a key role in the reluctance of some NATO members to admit Ukraine into the Alliance.

### C. LITERATURE REVIEW

Andriy Bychenko and Leonid Polyakov, experts with the Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies (UCEPS), conducted a survey in July 2000. Across all regions, 2,005 Ukrainians were polled regarding their opinions on NATO. Of these, 51 percent surveyed stated that Ukraine should never join the Alliance; 23 percent said Ukraine should join in 5 to 10 years; and 9 percent said Ukraine should join in 10 to 15 years.<sup>9</sup> In 2007, another poll was conducted of 11,000 Ukrainians across all regions of

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<sup>7</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 50.

<sup>8</sup> Alexei Makarkin, “Ukraine Headed for NATO,” *RIA Novosti*, 5 May 2006. Available from <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/2006-104-36.cfm> (accessed 25 March 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Andriy Bychenko and Leonid Polyakov, “How Much of NATO do Ukrainians Want?” (The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies, 1 July 2000). Available from <http://www.uceps.org/eng/show/544/> (accessed 25 March 2008).

the country. 40.2 percent said they were absolutely against membership in NATO; 19.6 percent were against; 9.8 percent were supportive; and 9.3 percent were fully supportive.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, despite increased cooperation between the current Ukrainian government and NATO, over half of the population still does not want Kyiv to join the Alliance. Polyakov and Bychenko concluded from their study that:

For Ukrainians, NATO is: (a) a seemingly aggressive bloc which, for unknown reasons, does not pose any threat to Ukraine; (b) an alliance of democratic and rich countries unwilling to help Ukraine in the event of aggression against poor, half-democratic Ukraine. Consequently: (c) we do not entrust European security to the Alliance, and (d) our desire to join NATO is not very strong...The most positive attitude toward NATO is demonstrated by those who know more about it (experts and people aware of the PFP Programme). Those who know less about NATO's activities are more negative, and sometimes hostile to NATO. Such an attitude is evidently based on poor information about NATO in the Ukrainian press, and mainly anti-NATO materials of Russian mass media which are much more accessible to the average Ukrainian than Western mass media.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, it can be inferred that the Ukrainian public is poorly informed about NATO. Some believe that the negativity expressed toward NATO is a result of years of Soviet influence. “Soviet brainwashing,” retorted Anton Buteiko, a deputy foreign minister in 2006.<sup>12</sup> In response, the Ukrainian government launched an educational campaign on NATO across the country. According to Article 4 of the NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan: “In 2006, Ukraine will make a concerted effort to *increase public awareness about the alliance and the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership.*”<sup>13</sup> This campaign includes increased cooperation between state authorities and non-governmental organizations, local administrations, the NATO-Ukraine Civic League and the NATO Information and Documentation Centre (NIDC) in Kyiv. Conferences, round-tables and

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<sup>10</sup> “Most Ukrainians support EU, oppose NATO membership-poll,” (Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies, 26 June 2007). Available from <http://www.uceps.org/eng/show/1050/> (accessed 25 March 2008).

<sup>11</sup> Bychenko and Polyakov, “How Much of NATO do Ukrainians Want?”

<sup>12</sup> “Europe: Surrounding Russia; Georgia, Ukraine and NATO,” *The Economist*, 17 June 2006, 44. Available from <http://proquest.umi.com/> (accessed 23 March 2008).

<sup>13</sup> “NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan for 2006 in the Framework of NATO-Ukraine Action Plan,” par. 21. Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b060407e.pdf> (accessed 24 March 2008); *italics in the original.*

workshops will be organized to increase awareness. Also, “the State Television and Radio Committee, in cooperation with the National Centre on Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, will continue to *monitor public opinion* on NATO-Ukraine cooperation and Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic integration policy through semi-annual polling. These polls will seek to identify common public misperceptions, and the results will support recommendations for coordination of a national information policy in this area.”<sup>14</sup>

NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer has stated that “NATO’s doors, to an even closer relationship, remain open, but it is ultimately up to Ukraine’s people, and their elected leaders, to determine the country’s future path with NATO.”<sup>15</sup> Increased public support for NATO, demonstrated through a nation-wide referendum, will significantly boost Ukraine’s membership aspiration. One expert believes that public opinion in Ukraine can be easily swayed. Sergei Markov is the Director of the Institute of Political Studies in Moscow and an advisor to the Russian foreign minister and presidential administration on foreign policy issues. In his words:

The obstacle in the form of Ukrainian public opinion will be easily cleared. A massive propaganda campaign will be launched, bankrolled by NATO. The issue of NATO membership will, as Yushchenko promised, go before a referendum. The question, however, will not be “Do you want Ukraine to become a member of the North Atlantic alliance and to send its soldiers to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan?” It will be different: “Do you agree with military reform in Ukraine, which includes NATO membership and transition from conscription to a contract-based, professional army?” The majority will vote for abolishing the draft. The conscripts’ mothers will overwhelm the opponents.<sup>16</sup>

Craig Nation, director of Eurasian and Russian studies at the U.S. Army War College, wrote in 2000 that domestic opposition “will remain on Ukraine’s agenda for some time to come, and in the best of circumstances Kyiv will require a decade or more

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<sup>14</sup> “NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan for 2006 in the Framework of NATO-Ukraine Action Plan,” par. 22, *italics in the original*.

<sup>15</sup> “Introductory remarks by the Secretary General, Informal meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the level of Foreign Ministers,” 27 April 2007. Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070427a.html> (accessed 30 May 2008).

<sup>16</sup> Sergei Markov, “Ukraine’s NATO Membership is Path to ‘Small’ Cold War,” *Moscow News* (in English), 20 June 2007. Available from <http://proquest.umi.com/> (accessed 22 March 2008).

to prepare for accession to Western institutions.”<sup>17</sup> Reversing public opinion on NATO is a long-term problem. According to Nation, the “Russian factor is more troublesome in the short term...there is no sign that Russia has any intention of abandoning its strong opposition to Ukrainian membership in NATO.”<sup>18</sup> In order for NATO and Ukraine to avoid confrontation with Russia, Nation recommended “the NATO-Ukraine relationship...remain limited to nation assistance and security coordination.”<sup>19</sup>

John Kriendler, professor of NATO and European security issues at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, disagreed in his 2007 study. He analyzed the costs and benefits of Ukraine in NATO, and came to the conclusion that the benefits would far outweigh the costs. “The complex challenge then is for Ukraine to build the necessary political consensus, successfully market itself to NATO allies, and develop the necessary rapprochement with Russia.”<sup>20</sup>

Building the necessary political consensus in Ukraine may prove difficult. According to a recent CRS Report for the U.S. Congress, “If policies to secure NATO membership move forward, the Party of Regions and the Communists can be expected to try to slow down or block these efforts, including stirring up anti-NATO sentiment in the eastern and southern parts of the country.”<sup>21</sup> Ukrainian opinion regarding NATO membership is regionalized. The southern and eastern portions of the country are strongly against it, while the central and western portions of the country are mixed in their opinion regarding NATO.

Marketing Ukraine to NATO allies will also prove to a difficult challenge. As mentioned previously, NATO officials and members of the Alliance desire a positive, nation-wide referendum to be held regarding NATO before consideration will be given to

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<sup>17</sup> Craig Nation, *NATO's Relations with Russia and Ukraine* (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, June 2000), 19. Available from <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/98-00/nation.pdf> (accessed 28 March 2008).

<sup>18</sup> Nation, *NATO's Relations with Russia and Ukraine*, 36.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>20</sup> Kriendler, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends*, 12.

<sup>21</sup> Steven Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL33460, 17 December 2007, 7.

membership. Also, necessary political reforms must take place. According to Janusz Bugajski of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), priority measures to improve governance should include constitutional reform, judicial reform, administrative reform, and greater transparency and responsiveness. Improvement in these areas will signal Ukraine's commitment to integration with Western institutions such as NATO. Bugajski concluded, "If they wish to become a candidate for NATO, the Ukrainian authorities must demonstrate their long-term commitment to transatlantic security and values and explain to their citizens the nature and value of the alliance."<sup>22</sup>

However, even political reform and improved public perception of NATO may not be enough to propel Ukraine into this Alliance. David Yost, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, wrote in 1998 that "Ukrainian accession to the Alliance is a distant prospect, because of a general Western reluctance to confront Russia in such a sensitive area."<sup>23</sup> Ukraine is of utmost importance to Russia, strategically and psychologically. According to Yost, a key issue among European countries is the fear that enlargement may increase the risk of confrontation with Moscow.<sup>24</sup> According to *The Economist*, "The Americans want to bring in both Georgia and Ukraine, but other NATO governments are less gung-ho. One reason is that some of the democratic sheen has come off both [the Rose and Orange] revolutions. Another is that many Europeans feel that the Alliance is already big enough, and that some newer members joined too soon. Some members also do not want NATO to move further and faster than the European Union. And a few are against because they fear antagonising the Russians."<sup>25</sup> Also, the fact that 27 percent of the oil and 24 percent of the gas consumed in the EU are of Russian origin does not help Ukraine's cause.<sup>26</sup> There is a fear that Russia could cut off

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<sup>22</sup> Bugajski, *Ukraine: A Net Assessment of 16 Years of Independence*, 31.

<sup>23</sup> David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 155.

<sup>24</sup> Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security*, 122.

<sup>25</sup> "Europe: Surrounding Russia; Georgia, Ukraine and NATO," *The Economist*.

<sup>26</sup> Jeronim Perovic, "Russian Energy Power Abroad," *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 33, 22 January 2008, 2. Available from [http://www.informest.it/docs/documenti/RU\\_20080225161219\\_RU\\_RAD\\_33\\_2007.pdf](http://www.informest.it/docs/documenti/RU_20080225161219_RU_RAD_33_2007.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2008).

energy to Ukraine and to countries that support Ukraine's cause. Some NATO members have raised questions about what the response would be in such a situation.

#### **D. IMPORTANCE**

This research is pertinent because Ukraine's possible membership in NATO has a bearing on the prospects for international security and stability. The NATO enlargement process in Ukraine might in some circumstances lead to unstable situations. The threat of social unrest, political turmoil, and unsettling Russian reactions is real. Maintaining the peace between Ukrainians and ethnic Russians residing in Ukraine is a paramount concern, because conflict could have destabilizing effects within Ukraine and the surrounding region. Conversely, in the proper conditions NATO membership for Ukraine might have stabilizing effects and help to lead Russia away from what some experts have called a neo-imperial policy. Ukraine's possible membership is of vital importance not only to NATO, but also to the European Union and the West in general.

#### **E. METHODS**

This thesis relies on a qualitative and historical methodology to assess the main variables affecting Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration. These variables include two main internal factors (Ukrainian public opinion and the political situation in Ukraine) and two principal external factors (the Russian Federation and NATO itself). These variables are analyzed to provide historical perspective regarding the current situation. The goals are to assess the prospects for Ukraine's membership in NATO and to advance understanding of the potential implications of this membership.

#### **F. THESIS OVERVIEW**

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter II examines the internal factors – that is, public opinion and domestic politics. Chapter III analyzes the main external factor to

the north and east – Russia. Chapter IV considers the deliberations and competing views within NATO. Chapter V offers conclusions.

## II. UKRAINE IN NATO: THE DYNAMIC WITHIN ITS BORDERS

This chapter focuses on the factors affecting Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration within its boundaries - namely its society and the evolving Ukrainian political scene. These two factors are important because, according to R. Craig Nation, an American analyst, "the most serious threats to stability today are located within Ukraine itself, in the potential for social and political unrest."<sup>27</sup> NATO's policies regarding Ukraine have attempted to offer support in these two areas.

As James Sherr has pointed out, "The public's changing mood on NATO has been carefully followed by Ukrainian media and think tanks, with the latest research showing that both ambivalence and curiosity regarding the organization are on the rise. However, half of Ukrainians still oppose membership whereas, depending on the survey, only up to 30 percent would approve of it."<sup>28</sup> As noted previously, in a July 2000 survey 2,005 Ukrainians were polled regarding their opinion of NATO. In this survey, 51 percent of Ukrainians polled said they would never vote for Ukraine's accession to NATO. Furthermore, 46.2 percent of those polled viewed NATO as an aggressive military bloc, 21.5 percent viewed it as a defense alliance, 16.5 percent viewed it as a peacekeeping organization and 15.8 percent could not decide how to classify it. When asked which institution ensured regional security in Europe, NATO received only 4.1 percent of the vote while the UN received a plurality of the votes at 39.3 percent.<sup>29</sup>

A more recent poll was conducted in 2007 among 11,000 Ukrainians. "Responding to a question about their attitude to NATO membership, 40.2 percent said they were absolutely against, 19.6 percent were against, 9.8 percent were supportive and

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<sup>27</sup> Craig Nation, *NATO's Relations with Russia and Ukraine*, (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, June 2000), 19

<sup>28</sup> James Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine's Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, March 2006), 9.

<sup>29</sup> Andriy Bychenko and Leonid Polyakov, "How Much of NATO do Ukrainians Want?" (The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies, 1 July 2000).

9.3 percent fully supportive.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the Kyiv-based Sofia think tank conducted a poll of Ukrainian citizens in May 2008, and only 21.4 percent of Ukrainians supported NATO membership for Ukraine.<sup>31</sup>

In the face of poll findings such as these, Anton Buteiko, a deputy foreign minister, said, “Soviet brainwashing.”<sup>32</sup> A similar view was expressed by Ukrainian foreign minister Hennadiy Udovenko when he stated that Ukrainian “minds are penetrated by Communist ideology which said that NATO was enemy number one...and now suddenly we say that NATO does not pose a threat to us. This is strongly challenged by a part of our society.”<sup>33</sup> The “Soviet brainwashing” factor is one part of the equation, due to the extensive cultural and historical ties between Ukraine and Russia. Many Ukrainians fear that Ukrainian membership in NATO would worsen ties with Russia. Another part of the equation has to do with recent world events. As James Sherr has observed, “In the wake of the Kosovo crisis and Iraq war, NATO continues to be regarded with pronounced suspicion.”<sup>34</sup> Also, memories still linger of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, in which Ukrainian draftees were forced to participate. Some Ukrainians fear that NATO membership could “embroil them in Afghanistan again, and in similar conflicts in distant parts of the world.”<sup>35</sup>

Russians have taken note of the anti-NATO views of many Ukrainians. Sergei Markov of the Moscow Institute of Political Studies refers to Ukraine’s public opinion as the leader of the NATO “con party” in Ukraine. “The ‘con party’ is led by Ukraine’s public opinion, driven by the reluctance to see the country become an enemy of Russia,

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<sup>30</sup> “Most Ukrainians support EU, oppose NATO membership — poll.”

<sup>31</sup> Pavel Korduban, “Will NATO become unpopular among Ukrainians?” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:111 (11 June 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 19 June 2008).

<sup>32</sup> “Europe: Surrounding Russia; Georgia, Ukraine and NATO,” *The Economist*.

<sup>33</sup> Udovenko quoted in Volodymyr Pedchenko, “Ukraine’s Delicate Balancing Act,” *Transitions*, June 1997, 75.

<sup>34</sup> Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine’s Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, 9.

<sup>35</sup> Paul Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL34415, 18 April 2008, 24.

as well as by the general distrust of NATO.”<sup>36</sup> Another Russian who has noticed the Ukrainian opinion polls is Russia’s former president, Vladimir Putin. At a February 2008 press conference in Munich, when he was still serving as President, Putin was asked a question regarding Ukraine and NATO. He stated, “As for the situation in Ukraine, according to the information I have, the overwhelming majority of Ukrainians oppose joining NATO. But the Ukrainian leadership has nonetheless signed a certain document on starting the accession procedure. Is this democracy? Were the country’s citizens asked their opinion?”<sup>37</sup> The Russian influence on Ukraine’s NATO membership aspiration is discussed in greater detail in Chapter III.

Western analysts and officials have also taken note of these polls. James Sherr, a British expert, stated, “Until Yushchenko and pro-NATO institutions lose their timidity and confront public prejudice directly, membership of the Alliance will remain off the table.”<sup>38</sup> From the U.S. point of view, “U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried made clear that a decision about whether NATO integration is a good idea is up to the people of Ukraine, a view that one can safely assume all allies would be sympathetic to.”<sup>39</sup>

Ukrainian officials understand that the majority of Ukrainian citizens are against membership in NATO. In their view, the key is to educate the public on NATO’s purposes, and get rid of the “Soviet brainwashing” ideas of NATO. As noted in Chapter I, a plan by the Ukrainian government to improve the image of NATO among Ukrainians has been in development since 2006. Article 4 of the 2006 NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan states:

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<sup>36</sup> Sergei Markov, “Ukraine’s NATO Membership is Path to ‘Small’ Cold War”.

<sup>37</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Transcript of Annual Big Press Conference,” *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, 14 February 2008. [http://kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/02/14/1011\\_type82915\\_160266.shtml](http://kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/02/14/1011_type82915_160266.shtml)

<sup>38</sup> Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine’s Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, 9.

<sup>39</sup> John Kriendl, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends*, 10.

In 2006, Ukraine will make a concerted effort to increase public awareness about the alliance and the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership. In this context, it will work to strengthen cooperation between state authorities and non-governmental organizations and to increase the involvement of local administrations in NATO-Ukraine cooperative projects. In carrying this effort forward, the Ukrainian authorities will work closely with the NATO-Ukraine Civic League and the NATO Information and Documentation Centre (NIDC) in Kyiv to organize conferences, roundtables, and workshops on Ukraine's aspirations to membership in the Alliance...Ukraine will also ensure full implementation of the State Programme of Public Information on Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Integration for 2004-2007, including their adequate financing in accordance with an October 2005 Presidential Decree. The State Television and Radio Committee, in cooperation with the National Centre on Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, will continue to monitor public opinion on NATO-Ukraine cooperation and Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration policy through semi-annual polling. These polls will seek to identify common public misperceptions, and the results will support recommendations for coordination of a national information policy in this area.<sup>40</sup>

The NATO International Staff is also aware of the Ukrainian polls, and understands that this issue must be addressed before Ukraine could be offered membership in the alliance. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer recently stated that "NATO's doors, to an even closer relationship, remain open, but it is ultimately up to Ukraine's people, and their elected leaders, to determine the country's path with NATO."<sup>41</sup> In response, "Kiev has assured Brussels that Ukraine would join NATO only after asking the opinion of the Ukrainian people."<sup>42</sup> The views of the NATO International Staff and NATO countries with regard to Ukrainian public opinion about NATO are discussed further in Chapter IV.

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<sup>40</sup> "NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan for 2006 in the Framework of NATO-Ukraine Action Plan," par. 21-22, *italics in the original*.

<sup>41</sup> Kriendler, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends*, 10.

<sup>42</sup> "NATO and Ukraine: Who Needs the Other More?" *Russian News and Information Agency Novosti*, 18 January 2008. Available from <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20080118/97289307.html> (accessed 22 March 2008).

Some experts believe that the process of establishing a positive view of NATO throughout Ukrainian society will be lengthy. According to R. Craig Nation, the director of Russian and Eurasian studies at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, PA, “The limits to NATO-Ukrainian cooperation derive both from Ukraine’s domestic weakness, and concern for possible Russian reactions. The threat of domestic instability will remain on Ukraine’s agenda for some time to come, and in the best of circumstances Kyiv will require a decade and more to prepare for accession to Western institutions.”<sup>43</sup> It will take time for the educational process to influence public opinion regarding NATO. Also, it will take time for Ukrainian society to fully trust the government and its institutions. Ukraine has been independent only since 1991, and its institutions are still developing. Years of corruption during previous administrations and a shaky economy have not fostered a positive outlook among the population. Indeed, according to one study, “Less than 10 percent of the population unconditionally trusts the government.”<sup>44</sup>

Other experts believe that public opinion in Ukraine can be easily swayed. As noted previously, Sergei Markov has stated that:

The obstacle in the form of Ukrainian public opinion will be easily cleared. A massive propaganda campaign will be launched, bankrolled by NATO. The issue of NATO membership will, as Yushchenko promised, go before a referendum. The question, however, will not be “Do you want Ukraine to become a member of the North Atlantic alliance and to send its soldiers to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan?” It will be different: “Do you agree with military reform in Ukraine, which includes NATO membership and transition from conscription to a contract-based, professional army?” The majority will vote for abolishing the draft. The conscripts’ mothers will overwhelm the opponents.<sup>45</sup>

Despite this claim, attempts to alter Ukrainian public opinion have yielded bleak results. A 2008 poll conducted by the Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies (UCEPS) asked Ukrainians if they had changed their attitude toward NATO

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<sup>43</sup> Nation, *NATO’s Relations with Russia and Ukraine*, 36.

<sup>44</sup> Anatoliy Grytsenko and Leonid Polyakov, “Ukraine-NATO: The Future Depends on the Past,” (The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies, 7 December 2003). Available from <http://www.uceps.org> (accessed 13 March 2008).

<sup>45</sup> Sergei Markov, “Ukraine’s NATO Membership is Path to ‘Small’ Cold War.”

between 2004 and 2007. Of those polled, 61.9 percent responded that their opinion did not change, 9 percent responded that their opinion changed for the worse, and 10.9 percent responded that their opinion changed for the better. In addition, 11.7 percent responded that they have no interest in the question, and 6.5 percent responded that it was difficult to say how their attitude was affected.<sup>46</sup> These results suggest that more time and effort will be necessary to alter the opinions of Ukrainians regarding NATO membership.

To understand Ukrainian public opinion it must be noted that Ukraine is regionalized, and does not possess a developed or unified national identity. ‘Lacking any real experience of independent statehood prior to 1991, Ukraine has confronted the difficult challenge of building and sustaining a national identity. Underdeveloped national consciousness has been manifested by an aggravated and sometimes antagonistic regionalism.’<sup>47</sup> Many Ukrainians could be described as *tuteshni* - people whose primary identification is with their locality rather than with their state or nation.<sup>48</sup>

Ethnic Russians make up 17.3 percent of Ukraine’s population, and are concentrated in the southern and eastern parts of the country.<sup>49</sup> Ethnic Ukrainians in these regions tend to be Russian-speaking, are suspicious of Ukrainian nationalism, and support close ties with Russia. The people in the western regions are predominantly ethnic Ukrainians who speak Ukrainian and tend to be sympathetic to Ukrainian nationalism. ‘According to the independent Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, people in Ukraine’s eight western provinces, who make up about a quarter of the electorate, are eight times more likely to vote for the ‘Orange’ parties headed by President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, which stand for

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<sup>46</sup> ‘Did you change during 2004 – 2007 your attitude toward NATO?’ (The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies). Available from [http://www.uceps.org/poll.php?poll\\_id=135](http://www.uceps.org/poll.php?poll_id=135) (accessed 13 July 2008).

<sup>47</sup> Nation, *NATO’s Relations with Russia and Ukraine*, 10.

<sup>48</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 79.

<sup>49</sup> 2001 Ukraine census. Available from <http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/> (accessed 22 March 2008).

integrating with the European Union, joining NATO and keeping Russia at a distance.”<sup>50</sup> According to a 2005 survey, 31.3 percent of those polled in the western regions voted for Ukraine’s accession to NATO, while 32.1 percent voted against it.<sup>51</sup> This is by far the most balanced vote for NATO accession in any Ukrainian region. “In the three eastern provinces, also containing a quarter of the electorate, people are eight times more likely to vote for the ‘Blue’ Party of Regions, headed by former Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych, which wants to make Russian the second official language, forge closer economic ties with Russia and stay out of NATO.”<sup>52</sup> According to the 2005 survey, 77.6 percent of those polled in the eastern regions were against NATO accession.<sup>53</sup>

The central region of Ukraine is geographically, politically and culturally “in the middle” of the eastern and western regions of Ukraine. There is a more balanced mix of ethnicities located here. Although most of the population is Ukrainian-speaking and committed to Ukrainian independence, they “have a much milder and less ethnic version of Ukrainian nationalism and a much calmer and friendlier attitude toward Russians.”<sup>54</sup> As Anatol Lieven notes, “It is this central region of Ukraine – and not the west or the east - that has provided the dominant elements in the Ukrainian administrations since independence...and could be said to have saved the country. If Galicia and the Russian-speaking areas of Donetsk or Kharkiv – let alone Crimea – had been geographically contiguous to each other, the unity and peace of Ukraine would have been in serious doubt.”<sup>55</sup> According to the 2005 survey, 79.7 percent of those polled in this region were against NATO accession.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> “Ukraine’s Orange-Blue Divide,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 28 September 2007, 4. <http://www.proquest.umi.com/> (accessed 14 March 2008).

<sup>51</sup> Andriy Yakovenko, “Ukraine’s Search for its Place in Europe: the East or the West?” (Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, March 2007), 79.

<sup>52</sup> “Ukraine’s Orange-Blue Divide”, 4.

<sup>53</sup> Yakovenko, “Ukraine’s Search for its Place in Europe: the East or the West?” 78.

<sup>54</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 82.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>56</sup> Yakovenko, “Ukraine’s Search for its Place in Europe: the East or the West?” 78.

Finally, as mentioned previously, the southern region of Ukraine has a large proportion of ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians residing within its territories. This region includes the fragile, autonomous republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. In Crimea, 58.3 percent of the population is ethnic Russian while 71.6 percent of the population in Sevastopol is ethnic Russian.<sup>57</sup>

Crimea has been a location of severe anti-NATO protests – specifically, protests against the annual multinational military exercise hosted by Ukraine named “Sea Breeze.” Of particular note was the 2006 version of “Sea Breeze.” Protests broke out after U.S. Marines arrived in the city of Feodosiya to take part in the exercise. The Marines eventually withdrew from the peninsula, and the Crimean Parliament declared Crimea a “NATO-free territory.”

Sevastopol is the homeport of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, and Russians view it as having great historical and strategic importance. An agreement was reached between Ukraine and Russia for Russian ships to remain in place until 2017, with Russia leasing the facilities from Ukraine. The local ethnic Russian population strongly supports the presence of the Russian fleet. According to the 2005 survey, the largest opposition to accession to NATO is represented here in the southern regions, or 79.7 percent.<sup>58</sup> Crimea and its potential impact on Ukraine’s NATO membership aspiration are discussed further in Chapter III. To conclude, as Andriy Bychenko and Leonid Polyakov have observed:

For Ukrainians, NATO is: (a) a seemingly aggressive bloc which, for unknown reasons, does not pose any threat to Ukraine; (b) an alliance of democratic and rich countries unwilling to help Ukraine in the event of aggression against poor, half-democratic Ukraine. Consequently: (c) we do not entrust European security to the Alliance, and (d) our desire to join NATO is not very strong...the attitude toward NATO on the part of Ukraine's population is rather contradictory. Ukrainians are clearly sympathetic to the ‘western way of life’, but unprepared to fight for it; they would like to stay away from any disputes between Russia and the West, and not take any sides. The most positive attitude toward NATO is demonstrated by those who know more about it (experts and people aware

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<sup>57</sup> 2001 Ukraine census.

<sup>58</sup> Yakovenko, “Ukraine’s Search for its Place in Europe: the East or the West?” 78.

of the PfP Programme). Those who know less about NATO's activities are more negative, and sometimes hostile to NATO. Such an attitude is evidently based on poor information about NATO in the Ukrainian press, and mainly anti-NATO materials of Russian mass media which are much more accessible to the average Ukrainian than Western mass media.<sup>59</sup>

Instead of accession to NATO, over half of Ukrainian society would like to see the government focus on the overall economic situation in Ukraine. This includes the general deterioration of the standard of living, unemployment and delayed payment of wages, pensions, stipends and other social benefits.<sup>60</sup>

Since independence, Ukrainian governments have had differing approaches regarding NATO. “The man who led Ukraine to independence, Leonid M. Kravchuk, until a few months before the collapse of communism was the party secretary in charge of ideology - the very same man who used to denounce the use of the Ukrainian language as ‘bourgeoisie nationalism.’”<sup>61</sup> Even though Kravchuk had ties to the former Soviet regime, he sought to strengthen Ukraine’s sovereignty and improve relations with the West. Kravchuk stated, “The best guarantee to Ukraine’s security would be membership to NATO.”<sup>62</sup> Kravchuk maintained ties with Moscow, mainly to prevent his country from falling into economic ruin, but he kept his position on NATO firm while serving as president (1991 – 1994) and subsequently. In a July 2008 speech, Kravchuk stated, “Ukraine must protect its national interests, independence and territorial integrity. Such protection can be provided by the Alliance only. There are no other structures in Europe, capable to protect Ukraine.”<sup>63</sup> In 1994, Ukraine (then under Kravchuk’s leadership) became the first Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) country to join the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program.

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<sup>59</sup> Bychenko and Polyakov, “How Much of NATO do Ukrainians Want?”

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ilya Prizel, “Ukraine’s Hollow Decade,” *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2002, 367.

<sup>62</sup> Taras Kuzio, “Ukraine and NATO: The Evolving Strategic Partnership,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, June 1998, 8, cited in Özlem Tür, *NATO’s Relations with Russia and Ukraine* (Ankara, Turkey: Middle East Technical University, June 2000), 27.

<sup>63</sup> “Kravchuk: Only NATO can protect Ukraine,” 14 July 2008. Available from <http://eng.for-ua.com/news/2008/07/14/164010.html> (accessed 18 July 2008).

Tor Bukkvoll has described the view held by a prominent supporter of Kravchuk's government: "The former chairman of the Ukrainian parliament's Committee for Foreign Affairs, Dmytro Pavlycho, in outlining the direction of Ukrainian foreign policy, stated: 'Our foreign policy has to lead us to Europe, where we were born and where we grew up as a nation, and from where we were torn away and put in an Asian imprisonment, redressed in Muscovite clothes, and educated in the Slavic-Russian language of Genghis-Khan's great-grandchildren.'"<sup>64</sup>

When elections came in 1994, Leonid Kuchma replaced Kravchuk as the president of Ukraine. Kuchma favored a policy of *mnogovektornost*: a "multi-vector" policy that placed equal emphasis on relations with Russia and the West.<sup>65</sup> Despite wanting to maintain good relations with the West, Kuchma initially was against NATO enlargement. "During a visit to the United States in November 1994, newly elected President Leonid Kuchma expressed great skepticism regarding the idea of an enlargement of NATO to the east."<sup>66</sup> However, Kuchma quickly shifted his attitude regarding NATO. "When U.S. President Bill Clinton visited Kiev in May of 1995, Kuchma surprised most observers by telling him that he believed NATO would be a guarantor for stability in Europe, and that Kyiv was no longer against NATO enlargement."<sup>67</sup> The benefits that his regime sought from improved relations with NATO were increased Euro-Atlantic identity, security and prosperity. "During the 1990s, Ukraine became the third largest recipient of U.S. assistance, after Israel and Egypt."<sup>68</sup> Cooperation was significantly increased between NATO and Ukraine during Kuchma's ten years in office, most notably with the "NATO-Ukraine Action Plan." Despite Kuchma's policy reversal on NATO enlargement and increased cooperation, Steven

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<sup>64</sup> Bukkvoll, "Ukraine and NATO: The Politics of Soft Cooperation," 369.

<sup>65</sup> Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine's Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, 9.

<sup>66</sup> Bukkvoll, "Ukraine and NATO: The Politics of Soft Cooperation," 363.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 363.

<sup>68</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Neither East Nor West: Ukraine's Security Policy Under Kuchma," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 52, No. 5, September/October 2005, 65.

Woehrel states, “His rule was characterized by fitful economic reform (albeit with solid economic growth in later years), widespread corruption, and a deteriorating human rights record.”<sup>69</sup>

In 2004, presidential elections were held between, among other candidates, the pro-Russian, anti-NATO Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych and the pro-Western, pro-NATO former Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko. The elections were criticized as not free and fair by international observers for many reasons, specifically media bias towards Yanukovych, abuse of absentee ballots, inaccurate voter lists, and the barring of opposition representatives from electoral commissions. There were suspicions of Russian interference on behalf of Yanukovych. A runoff occurred in November, and Yanukovych was declared the winner. Yushchenko’s supporters accused Yanukovych of electoral fraud, and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians blockaded government offices in Kyiv and appealed to the Ukrainian Supreme Court to invalidate the vote. This came to be known as the “Orange Revolution,” after Yushchenko’s chosen campaign color.<sup>70</sup> The court invalidated the election, and Yushchenko won the December re-vote 51.99 percent to Yanukovych’s 44.19 percent. Yushchenko took office in January 2005. Yanukovych became Yushchenko’s Prime Minister a year later.

Taras Kuzio of the *Kyiv Post* recently described the importance of the Orange Revolution in regards to NATO. In his words:

Ukraine’s Orange Revolution led to a fundamental reform of the Constitution that moved the country away from the abused super-presidentialism prevalent under former President Leonid Kuchma to a parliamentary system. Control over the government has been transferred from the executive to the winning parliamentary coalition while the president retains key areas of control, such as foreign and defense policy. Ukraine’s reformed political system has improved democratization by leading to greater checks and balances between different branches of government. There is a clear division within the 27 post-communist states: most are super-presidential systems that dominate the largely

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<sup>69</sup> Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, 1.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 1.

autocratic CIS where democracy has regressed. Parliamentary systems dominate the successful democracies of Central-Eastern Europe and the Baltic states who have joined NATO and the EU.<sup>71</sup>

Kuzio also noted that, in addition to having parliamentary systems, all post-communist states that have joined NATO and the EU do not marginalize the opposition with high thresholds to gain representation in parliament, and they uphold the rule of law. Ukraine has a threshold of 3 percent, which is lower than the European average of 4 percent. Ukraine's influential neighbor, Russia, has been able to marginalize the opposition from the State Duma with a threshold of seven percent.

In reference to the 2007 parliamentary elections that Yulia Tymoshenko won, Yushchenko stated that "We have to involve the opposition in forming the government...One must take into account that Mr. Yanukovych received one-third of the votes in the election."<sup>72</sup> Since the 2007 parliamentary elections, the Ukrainian parliament has been divided as follows: Viktor Yanukovych's party, the "Party of Regions," has 34 percent of the seats in parliament; Tymoshenko's Party has 30.71 percent of the seats; Yushchenko's Party, "Our Ukraine/People's Self Defense," has 14.15 percent of the seats; and the Communist Party has 5.39 percent.<sup>73</sup> There are also several other parties with less representation. In short, Ukraine has a parliamentary system, the rule of law is in the process of being reformed, and the opposition is represented in the Rada (parliament). Therefore, if Kuzio is correct in his analysis, Ukraine is on the path to NATO membership, at least in terms of the democratic standards adopted in its political institutions.

As Steven Woehrel has observed, "After taking office as President, Yushchenko put integration into the global economy and Euro-Atlantic institutions at the center of Ukraine's foreign policy...In the longer term, Yushchenko wants Ukraine to join the

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<sup>71</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Reflections on NATO - Will Ukraine and Georgia Ever Join This Alliance?" *Kyiv Post*, 18 April 2007.

<sup>72</sup> Fred Weir, "In Ukraine, Fiery Tymoshenko Revives Orange Hopes," *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 October 2007, 7. Available from <http://www.proquest.com>. (accessed 12 March 2008).

<sup>73</sup> Janusz Bugajski, "Ukraine: A Net Assessment of 16 Years of Independence," (Washington D.C.: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, February 2008), 31.

European Union and NATO.”<sup>74</sup> There have been numerous statements from his government regarding Euro-Atlantic integration. First Vice Prime Minister Oleksandr Turchynov stressed that, “Today, leaders of the state have a common point of view of further prospects of Ukraine towards the Euro-Atlantic integration. Ukraine’s consistency towards Europe and a stand which the President of Ukraine, government and the parliamentary majority take is evidence of the seriousness of our intentions...Ukraine is a European country and should be among the European states. From this point of view, cooperation with NATO and Euro-Atlantic integration is an important element.”<sup>75</sup> Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko has been described over the years as “lukewarm” regarding NATO. However, she has stated that “her priorities would be to fight corruption and to adopt concrete reforms that would bring Kyiv closer to its long-term goals of joining the European Union and the NATO military alliance.”<sup>76</sup> She has also emphasized the importance of the government’s implementation of programs and information campaigns that will enhance NATO’s image among Ukrainian citizens.

Under Yushchenko, an “Intensified Dialogue” on membership with NATO was launched in 2005. According to Grigoriy M. Perepelytsia, a Ukrainian expert, “The aim of this dialogue is to give Ukrainian officials the opportunity to learn more about what would be expected of Ukraine as a potential member of the Alliance, while simultaneously letting NATO examine Ukrainian reforms and capabilities.”<sup>77</sup> Continued progress has been made toward NATO membership. The next major step to NATO integration for Ukraine is obtaining a Membership Action Plan (MAP). A NATO MAP is a major achievement in the NATO membership process. In the words of Perepelytsia:

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<sup>74</sup> Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, 6.

<sup>75</sup> Government of Ukraine, “Oleksandr Turchynov held a Meeting with NATO Deputy Secretary General Jirzhi Shedevi,” *Web Portal of Ukrainian Government*, 22 January 2008, [http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art\\_id=107010680](http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=107010680). (accessed 13 May 2008).

<sup>76</sup> Roman Olearchyk, “Ukraine PM has Goodwill,” *Financial Times*, 24 December 2007, 3. Available from <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed 21 March 2008).

<sup>77</sup> Grigoriy M. Perepelytsia, “NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads,” *Military Technology*, Vol. 32, Issue 1, Jan 2008, 241.

In the MAP framework, Annual National Programmes are developed which focus on a number of requirements for aspirant countries, including in the political, economic, resource, legal and security fields. Aspirant countries are expected to demonstrate a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy; fair treatment of minority populations; commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes with neighbours; the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance; and a commitment to democratic civil-military relations and structures.<sup>78</sup>

However, one further note regarding a MAP for Ukraine should be understood. According to Perepelytsia, “It [a MAP] would not, however, guarantee any future membership in the Alliance - such an invitation would depend on the country’s ability to meet membership criteria.”<sup>79</sup>

According to Steven Woehrel of the Congressional Research Service, “In August 2006, the Yanukovych government postponed making a formal request for a MAP, saying that more time was needed to educate the Ukrainian public about NATO and for Ukraine and NATO to improve cooperation under existing agreements.”<sup>80</sup> However, in January 2008, “President Viktor Yushchenko, Speaker Arseniy Yatsenyuk and PM [Prime Minister] Yulia Tymoshenko wrote a letter to the NATO Secretary General to confirm Ukraine’s effort to join NATO MAP and hope for a positive answer at the Ukraine-NATO summit in Bucharest in April.”<sup>81</sup> The NATO Allies chose not to offer Ukraine a MAP at the April 2008 summit. “However, they expressed support for Ukraine’s MAP application, and said that Kiev could receive a MAP at the NATO Foreign Ministers’ meeting in December 2008 if remaining questions over its application

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<sup>78</sup> Perepelytsia, “NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads,” 242.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 242.

<sup>80</sup> Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, 6.

<sup>81</sup> Government of Ukraine, “Joining NATO MAP requires no drastic changes in relations with NATO, Foreign Ministry NATO Department’s press service informs,” *Web Portal of Ukrainian Government*, 17 January 2008. Available from [http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art\\_id=105929688](http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=105929688) (accessed 20 March 2008).

are resolved.”<sup>82</sup> The results of the NATO summit in Bucharest and the national views of NATO members regarding Ukraine’s NATO membership aspiration are discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

Political uncertainties within Ukraine may impede its quest for NATO membership. The Freedom House Nations in Transit annual study upgraded Ukraine to “free” in 2006, the first CIS state to achieve this rating.<sup>83</sup> However, the 2007 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Ukraine 118 out of 179 countries.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, as recently as October 2008, intra-governmental disputes in Ukraine over domestic and international policies resulted in the dismissal of the Ukrainian parliament by President Yushchenko. A new parliamentary election will be held in December 2008, which will be the third such election since the 2004 Orange Revolution.

Janusz Bugajski, Director of the New European Democracies Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, identified four areas of governance in which Ukraine should make progress to support its pursuit of Euro-Atlantic integration:

*Constitutional reform.* Ukraine’s constitution and associated laws...need to be changed to eliminate ambiguities and draw clear delineations of authority between the president and the prime minister, and between the Rada and executive branch.

*Judicial reform.* Ukraine needs a judicial branch that can be relied upon to make fair decisions...Change is essential to curb corruption, to strengthen the rule of law in general and public respect for law, and to improve the business and investment climate.

*Administrative reform.* This is needed within the central government and between Kyiv and the regions. Ukraine requires a modern central government bureaucracy...to support a modern European state. Territorial-administrative reform should make *oblast* and local officials directly accountable to their publics.

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<sup>82</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 26.

<sup>83</sup> Kuzio, “Reflections on NATO - Will Ukraine and Georgia Ever Join This Alliance?”.

<sup>84</sup> Bugajski, “Ukraine: A Net Assessment of 16 Years of Independence,” 14.

*Greater transparency and responsiveness.* All levels of government need to become more transparent. Too many government decisions are made behind closed doors, creating opportunities for corruption and contributing to public cynicism about the fairness of state policy.<sup>85</sup>

Furthermore, current and future politicians should lessen their ties with the “business oligarchs,” or those wealthy businessmen who try to influence Ukrainian political decisions. Some oligarchs have been known to have ties with organized crime. According to James Sherr, in Ukraine, “the greatest security problem is the relationship between politics, business and crime.”<sup>86</sup> These reforms, if implemented, will send a strong signal to EU and NATO capitals that Ukraine is committed to reform and embarked on a path to Euro-Atlantic integration, including membership in NATO.

To conclude, it should be stressed again that the most serious threats to Ukraine’s stability today are located within its boundaries. Euro-Atlantic integration and NATO membership are achievable goals, and Ukraine is taking positive steps towards these goals. However, it will take time for planned educational reforms to alter the predominant anti-NATO opinion in Ukrainian society. An accelerated pace could have destabilizing effects in Ukraine. Also, the political reforms discussed in this chapter should take place to enhance the credibility of national political institutions in the eyes of Ukrainian society and current NATO members. As Perepelytsia has observed, “Any future accession of Ukraine to the Alliance will ultimately depend on the ability of the country to meet membership criteria, and on the domestic political will to move forward.”<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Bugajski, “Ukraine: A Net Assessment of 16 Years of Independence,” 14.

<sup>86</sup> James Sherr, *Ukraine: Prospects and Risks* (Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, October 2006), 3.

<sup>87</sup> Perepelytsia, “NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads,” 240.

### III. THE RUSSIAN INFLUENCE ON UKRAINE'S NATO ASPIRATION

This chapter examines the ability of Russia to influence aspirations to NATO membership in Ukrainian society through social, political and economic means. A brief analysis of the historical aspect of this relationship is followed by an examination of contemporary issues. Ukraine and Russia have had formal relations since the 17th century, and this relationship could be characterized as asymmetrical. Imperial Russia, the USSR (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), and the Russian Federation succeeded in subordinating Ukraine socially, politically and economically for over three centuries. Centuries of not being treated as an equal have driven Ukraine away from Russia.

Despite the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Russia's actions in recent years indicate that its leadership is seeking to reassert its influence in the region. Dmitri Trenin, a Russian expert, has described Russia's actions as "working to create its own solar system."<sup>88</sup> Ukraine is considered by Russia to be the cornerstone of this "solar system." However, many Ukrainians do not care to see their country become a planet revolving around Russia again. Russian actions over the last four centuries have stiffened Ukraine's resolve to escape Russian influence, while pushing for membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions such as NATO and the European Union.

With regard to the historical significance of Ukraine to Russia, Leonid Polyakov states that:

Ukraine occupies a special place in Russia's psyche. Toward no other neighbour, Belarus included, does Russia have such strong feelings...[M]uch of the Russian population and nearly all of the Russian elite still have grave psychological difficulties in accepting the fact of Ukrainian independence. This phenomenon has deep historical roots. All Russians trace their cultural, religious and linguistic roots (and even the name of Russia – from 'Rus') to a common historical predecessor. On the territory currently occupied by Ukraine, the first Eastern Slavic State, with its capital in Kyiv (Kiev), emerged in the early ninth century. This was

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<sup>88</sup> Dmitri Trenin, "Russia Leaves the West," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2006, 88.

Kievan Rus, and it existed until the 13th century. In contrast, Moscow was founded as a small fort in the 12th century and, at the time of its subjugation by the Mongols in the middle of the 13th century, was of little significance...For four centuries, the two regions developed separately. People in the territory around Kyiv were referred to as ‘Russians’, while people in the territory ruled by Moscow, though also ‘Russians’, were also more specifically referred to as ‘Muscovites.’<sup>89</sup>

However, during the centuries after Mongol subjugation (1240 – 1480), Moscow grew in power and built an empire by conquering new lands, while Rus-Ukraine struggled under Mongol rule and, later, under Polish-Lithuanian rule.<sup>90</sup>

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, relations worsened between the Ukrainian population and their Polish rulers, and a Cossack by the name of Bogdan Khmelnitsk led several uprisings. However, these uprisings were put down and overwhelmed by Polish counteroffensives. “Faced with the choice of seeking help from the Muslim Ottoman sultan or the Russian Orthodox Tsar, they chose to look to Muscovy...Khmelnitsk and his followers swore allegiance to Tsar Alexei.”<sup>91</sup> This is known as the Pereiaslav agreement, which was concluded in 1654. In the modern era, this is the beginning of the dynamic Russian-Ukrainian relationship and the root of the superior attitude that condescending Russians typically adopt toward Ukrainians: Russians believe Ukraine is dependent on it for leadership and protection.

Immediately after obtaining Khmelnitsk’s oath, the Tsar changed his title from “Tsar of All Rus” to “Tsar of All Great and Little Rus.”<sup>92</sup> Little Rus was the name given to Ukraine. “Moscow later imposed its power on Kyiv, liquidating Ukraine’s autonomy and proclaiming itself the ruler of Ukraine. In time, ‘Muscovites’ became ‘great Russians’ – or simply ‘Russians’ – and Ukrainians – known as ‘small Russians’ – lived under Russian, and later Soviet, rule.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Leonid Polyakov, “Current Russian-Ukrainian Rapprochement: Forward or Backward? A Rejoinder,” *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 33, no. 2, June 2002, 172.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>91</sup> Anatol Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1999), 20.

<sup>92</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 20.

<sup>93</sup> Polyakov, “Current Russian-Ukrainian Rapprochement: Forward or Backward? A Rejoinder,” 172.

The agreement in Pereiaslav is at the center of much controversy between Ukrainians and Russians:

[T]he Pereiaslav accession has always been of great symbolic importance, at least in Russian and Soviet propaganda, and it used to be the key “legal” question (insofar as law has any meaningful place in such debates) in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship. For Ukrainians—not just nationalists, but those who hoped for an autonomous Ukraine in alliance with Russia—this was simply a personal union between two states...Ukrainians point out correctly that such personal unions were common in medieval and renaissance Europe, and by no means implied the merging of the states concerned. They also point out that the promises made by Tsar Alexei amounted...to a guarantee of effective legal and administrative autonomy for that part of Ukraine which Khmelnitsky brought under the rule of the tsars...[T]hese promises were later broken by Alexei’s successors; naturally enough in the view of Ukrainian nationalists, these broken promises render the Pereiaslav agreement itself null and void.<sup>94</sup>

Russians, on the other hand, view “Khmelnitsky’s submission as the reunification of the lands of Rus, destined by religion and history, into one state and under the rule of one monarch.”<sup>95</sup> Anatol Lieven adds that, “The most extreme claim...is that the Ukrainians do not really exist as a nation, and are just a ‘Little Russian’ branch of the general stock, destined by history, religion and culture to come under the rule of Muscovy. This was the official position of the imperial Russian state before 1917, and to the fury of many Ukrainians, it is still widely held in Russia today.”<sup>96</sup>

After subjugating Ukraine to their rule, Russians regarded the Ukrainians as inferior. As Richard Pipes observes, “At no point in its history did Tsarist Russia formulate a consistent policy towards the minorities.”<sup>97</sup> In Lieven’s view, “Moves by the Russian government in the 150 years after Pereiaslav to remove all separate Ukrainian institutions were therefore undoubtedly a crime as well as a mistake.”<sup>98</sup> The subjection of Ukraine to Imperial Russia was blatant. There were various periods of Russification,

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<sup>94</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 21.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>97</sup> Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1997), 6.

<sup>98</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry* 22.

and Ukraine's autonomous institutions and laws were eventually abolished. Also, the use of the Ukrainian language was banned in schools and most publications: this brought Ukrainian cultural movements to a standstill. "In particular, Catherine the Great's introduction of the Great Russian form of serfdom into the Ukrainian lands was bitterly resented by the Ukrainian peasantry."<sup>99</sup>

In summation, regardless of what Russians claim regarding Ukraine's historic dependence on Russia, "Ukrainians possessed many of the attributes which in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20th centuries have gone to lay the foundations of nationhood for other countries in Europe: a widely different historical experience; particular traditions, institutions, and customs; and the existence of a separate language, albeit divided into different dialects."<sup>100</sup> An additional basis for Ukrainian nationalism and autonomy developed among Ukrainian farmers. Following the liberation of the serfs in 1861, a prosperous class of independent farmers developed due to the rich soil available in Ukraine. They viewed their soil as superior to Russia's, and could make a generous profit in the grain business. They were not interested in Russian agricultural institutions such as the commune. "On the whole, this Ukrainian peasantry knew neither the communal type of land ownership nor the service relationship between peasant and landlord."<sup>101</sup> This would change drastically when Joseph Stalin came to power and introduced collectivization and *kolkhozes*, or collective farms.

The Tsarist administration was overthrown in March 1917, and Ukraine enjoyed a brief period of independence. The Ukrainians demonstrated their desire to separate from Russian rule by organizing themselves politically. The Ukrainian Central Council, or Rada, was formed and based in Kyiv. In November 1917, the Rada demanded territorial autonomy from the Russian provisional government and proclaimed Ukraine an independent Ukrainian People's Republic. This bid for independence failed because another revolution took place in Russia, and the Bolsheviks came to power. "The Rada refused to accept the writ of Sovnarkom [the new Soviet Russian government, or the

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<sup>99</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 22.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>101</sup> Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, 9.

Council of People's Commissars]. Tens of thousands of armed fighters reached Kyiv. The struggle was scrappy, and it took until late January before Kyiv was occupied by the Bolshevik-led forces.”<sup>102</sup> Again, Ukraine was subjugated to Russian rule. However, in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the Soviet government ceded Ukraine to Germany in February 1918. After Germany signed an armistice with the Western Allies in November 1918, Ukrainian nationalist forces overthrew the German puppet regime in Kyiv and proclaimed Ukraine an independent republic. However, Soviet forces recaptured Kyiv, and by 1920 Soviet rule was consolidated in Ukraine.

Vladimir Lenin was the new leader in Russia, and he had a cooperative stance on nationalism in Ukraine. He believed in the right to national political self-determination: “that is, the right to separation and creation of an independent government. Every nation living in the state had, as a nation, one right and one right only: to separate from Russia and to create an independent state...Lenin, however, did not believe in the likelihood of Eastern Europe disintegrating into its national components.”<sup>103</sup> He believed that economic forces worked against the breakup of great states. He also believed that once oppressive force was removed, the psychological basis for nationalism and separatism would also vanish. Nations such as Ukraine would voluntarily become part of the Soviet state, and socialism would reign. A debate among the Bolsheviks centered on nationalism, and before it could be resolved, Lenin died. His successor, Joseph Stalin, did not share Lenin’s views on nationalism. He believed in a more coercive approach.

Under Stalin, “the main stress in the Communist interpretation of autonomy was on closer ties between the borderlands and Russia and on the enhancement of the authority and prestige of the Soviet regime...[A]utonomy was considered as an instrument of consolidation, not of decentralization.”<sup>104</sup> Soviet Commissariats were placed in charge of Ukraine, and they subjugated the local Ukrainian representatives. Control of Ukraine was essentially located in Moscow. The Commissariats showed utter disrespect

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<sup>102</sup> Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1997), 75.

<sup>103</sup> Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, 44.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 248.

for Ukrainian sovereignty and the constitutional rights of the Ukrainian people. When Ukraine formally protested to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), Stalin brushed these complaints aside as exaggerations or minor infractions. This was the beginning of severe Ukrainian hardship under Soviet rule. According to Lieven:

It was in the Soviet period that Ukraine experienced its greatest sufferings of modern times: the terrible famine of 1933, induced by Stalin's Communist regime to break peasant resistance to collectivization (and also, to a lesser extent, nationalist opposition to Soviet rule); the purges of the 1930s, which wiped out both the Ukrainian leadership which had fostered the national revival of the 1920s and a very large part of the Ukrainian cultural intelligentsia; the horrors of the Second World War and the Nazi occupation; and the Stalinist repression of western Ukraine which followed.<sup>105</sup>

In Ukraine, the period of collectivization and massive famine imposed by Stalin is referred to as the "Holodomor." By some estimates, the number of dead was close to four million. This period has been characterized by some as "a genocide of the Ukrainian people."<sup>106</sup> During World War II, many Ukrainian citizens did not even show any hostility to the invading German Army. "As the Germans advanced...into Ukraine, civilians often welcomed them as liberators...they hoped for the dissolution of the kolkhozes and the reopening of the churches, and national liberation as well."<sup>107</sup> The war ended with Ukraine under Soviet control again, and Stalin continued to brutally repress Ukrainian nationalism.

Despite the death of Stalin in 1953, Ukrainian nationalism continued to be repressed under Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev. "Among non-Russian nationalists...the name of Khrushchev was mud. In Kiev, where he had spent many years, he was detested for restricting the expression of Ukrainian national pride."<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 31.

<sup>106</sup> Stephane Courtois, *The Black Book of Communism* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1999), 168.

<sup>107</sup> Martin Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991* (New York, N.Y.; The Free Press, 1994), 284.

<sup>108</sup> Service, *A History of Modern Russia*, 367.

Some concessions were made, such as transfer of Crimea to Ukraine in 1954. “Yet the authorities curtailed and controlled the public expression of nationhood...Too much concession to national feeling might encourage separatist aspirations, and Ukraine’s very size – it contained the largest non-independent nation in Europe – would endanger the USSR’s integrity if a national movement got out of hand.”<sup>109</sup> In the 1970s, Brezhnev repressed border nationalism in Ukraine by arresting the leading national dissidents. So, under Soviet rule, Ukraine was continually repressed. This effectively “pushed” the Ukrainians further away from their “big brothers” to the East, as the Russians would like to think of themselves.

However, due to a drastic decline in the economy and an ecological disaster, the nationalist forces in Ukraine made serious headway to independence in the 1980s. According to the historian Martin Malia:

[T]his multinational empire [the USSR] remained stable as long as the economy was able to support a strong central state...[Economic] stagnation was undermining the republics just as it was eating away at the rest of the system...Chernobyl, in particular, accelerated the development of Ukrainian and Belorussian separatist sentiment; and the local apparatus easily found it in their interests to espouse this sentiment against Moscow. Moreover, the decline of the economy made resources scarcer and therefore increased competition for them, both among the republics and between the republics and the center. The consequence of this accumulation of grievances was a growing movement for local control as the only appropriate “restructuring” for the national republics. And *glasnost* for the first time made it possible to talk about all of this without undue fear of reprisal.<sup>110</sup>

Through *perestroika* and *glasnost*, Mikhail Gorbachev’s goals were to restructure the Soviet economy and make governmental institutions more transparent. However, these policies exacerbated nationalism and separatism in Ukraine. As Malia has

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<sup>109</sup> Service, *A History of Modern Russia*, 368.

<sup>110</sup> Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991*, 440.

observed, “The tragedy of Soviet nationality policy was that it encouraged the development of national identity while at the same time giving the energies thereby generated only a fraudulent outlet.”<sup>111</sup>

In December 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the USSR) dissolved and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was formed. In Malia’s words, “The coup de grâce came in December [1991], when Ukraine confirmed its parliament’s earlier declaration of independence in a referendum, thereby in effect ending the Union.”<sup>112</sup> Ukrainians voted overwhelmingly in favor of distancing themselves from Russian influence. “Over 90 percent of voters, including those in heavily Russian-populated areas of the republic, voted in favor of Ukrainian independence. Subsequent analyses show that the majority of voters in Ukraine came to support independence because they believed that a separate existence from the USSR might be the best guarantee for their economic well-being.”<sup>26</sup> Although Ukraine gained its independence in December 1991, the euphoric feelings did not last. Corruption and economic deterioration prevailed throughout the 1990s in Ukraine. According to Ilya Prizel, Research Professor of East European Studies and Professor of Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh:

The Kiev-based nomenklatura, no longer subject to outside supervision, absent a political challenge from within, and with no pretence of ideological commitment, went on a binge of corruption and asset-stripping of unprecedented proportions, making Ukraine the most corrupt country in the CIS...[T]he “rent” collected by the elite in 1992 achieved parity with the country’s GDP.<sup>113</sup>

Despite the economic degradation throughout the 1990s, “Ukraine managed to extract generous benefits from its relationship with Russia...Given the importance that Boris Yeltsin attached to Ukraine’s participation in the structures of the CIS and given the symbiotic links between the elites in Russia and in Ukraine, Yeltsin continued to

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<sup>111</sup> Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991*, 440.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 489.

<sup>26</sup> Astrid Tuminez, “Nationalism, Ethnic Pressures, and the Breakup of the Soviet Union,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Fall 2003, 114.

<sup>113</sup> Ilya Prizel, “Ukraine’s Hollow Decade,” *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2002, 371.

allow Ukraine to build up a huge debt to Russia.”<sup>114</sup> Energy was imported at subsidized prices from Russia or stolen from natural gas pipelines crossing Ukrainian territory. Sometimes it was resold on the world market for vast profits.

Russia’s “benevolent” treatment of independent Ukraine was unusual, and Kravchuk recognized Russia’s ulterior motive. “We want friendly relations with Russia, but Russia considers us to be her vassal and as her vassal we are expected to submit and agree.”<sup>115</sup> To prevent Ukraine from becoming reliant on Russia again, Kravchuk and his successor, Leonid Kuchma, looked to the West for support. “During the first decade of independence...Ukraine managed, despite obvious corruption, mismanagement, and crude expropriation of foreign investors’ assets to become the third largest beneficiary of U.S. aid.”<sup>116</sup>

During the 1990s, both Ukrainian presidents made favorable statements regarding NATO. Kravchuk spoke of eventual membership in the Alliance, while Kuchma spoke of NATO providing stability in the region. As noted in Chapter II, Kravchuk stated that “the best guarantee to Ukraine’s security would be membership to NATO.”<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, Kuchma told President Clinton in May 1995 that “he believed NATO would be a guarantor for stability in Europe, and that Kyiv was no longer against NATO enlargement.”<sup>118</sup> The fear of Ukraine again being subjugated to Russian rule most likely influenced their views regarding the benefits NATO could offer. However, the Ukrainian government decided to pursue a policy of *mnogovektornost*: a “multi-vector” policy that placed equal emphasis on relations with Russia and the West.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Prizel, “Ukraine’s Hollow Decade,” 382.

<sup>115</sup> Polyakov, “Current Russian-Ukrainian Rapprochement: Forward or Backward? A Rejoinder,” 173.

<sup>116</sup> Prizel, “Ukraine’s Hollow Decade,” 382.

<sup>117</sup> Kravchuk quoted in Taras Kuzio, “Ukraine and NATO: The Evolving Strategic Partnership,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, June 1998, 8, cited in Özlem Tür, *NATO’s Relations with Russia and Ukraine* (Ankara, Turkey: Middle East Technical University, June 2000), 27.

<sup>118</sup> Kuchma quoted in indirect discourse in Tor Bukkvoll, “Ukraine and NATO: The Politics of Soft Cooperation,” *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 1997, 363.

<sup>119</sup> James Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine’s Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, March 2006), 9.

Aspects of the relationship between Russia and Ukraine changed when Vladimir Putin became the Russian president in 1999. In 2001 President Kuchma described the modification in the relationship when he stated that “Mr. Putin pursues a very strict economic policy towards Ukraine, very strict, too pragmatic. With Yeltsin you could reach an agreement, but with Putin it’s cash upfront.”<sup>120</sup> As Prizel has observed, “[I]n the post-1998 era the Russian elite had neither the means nor the motivation to continue to subsidize Russia’s erstwhile empire.”<sup>121</sup> After cutting off the Yeltsin “free” loans, Putin re-introduced Russia’s subjugation tendencies towards Ukraine via economic power. His goal was to make Ukraine economically dependent on Russia for political purposes:

Since 1999 Russia has become Ukraine’s largest trading partner, investor, and creditor by far. Russian enterprises have acquired key sectors of Ukraine’s metal and chemical industries, and Russia has undertaken the financing of Ukraine’s program of nuclear power plant construction. While Moscow took a very accommodating position on the settling of Ukraine’s debt, this flexibility was accompanied by a visible increase in Russian influence on Ukraine’s political posture both in terms of economic and foreign policy.<sup>122</sup>

Energy dependence became the main source of Russian influence on Ukraine after Putin took office. “On becoming Acting President of the Russian Federation in December 1999, Vladimir Putin cut the supply of oil to Ukraine for the fifth time since 1991. The taps stayed off until April 2000, when President Kuchma took the first steps to meet Putin’s political demands.”<sup>123</sup> Instances such as this are an influential cause of Ukraine seeking security guarantees from the West through institutions such as NATO. Steven Woehrel of the Congressional Research Service has described Ukraine’s dependence on Russian energy as follows:

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<sup>120</sup> Kuchma quoted in Prizel “Ukraine’s Hollow Decade,” 383.

<sup>121</sup> Prizel, “Ukraine’s Hollow Decade,” 383.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 383.

<sup>123</sup> Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine’s Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, 6.

Although it possesses modest oil and natural gas reserves of its own, Ukraine is dependent upon Russia for most of its oil and natural gas...In 2004, these imports account for 80 percent of Ukraine's oil consumption and 78 percent of its natural gas consumption. Natural gas accounts for half of Ukraine's energy usage. Most Ukrainian homes are heated by natural gas. Ukraine's steel and other heavy industries, which play a key role in Ukraine's exports, are highly inefficient users of energy.<sup>124</sup>

Russian state-owned energy firms have raised prices dramatically over the years, and Ukraine has accumulated a sizable debt to Russia. "For years Ukraine has been hard-pressed to pay its debts to Gazprom and has regularly been indebted to Gazprom to the tune of about \$1 billion per year."<sup>125</sup> At times, energy has been cut off when Ukraine has defaulted on these payments. "Russia has been painted as 'bullying' Ukraine...by demanding higher prices for the natural gas being delivered...in an attempt to get them to submit to Moscow's political rule."<sup>126</sup>

Of particular note, energy prices and disputes have increased dramatically since the 2004 "Orange Revolution," when Viktor Yushchenko won the presidency. Russian President Vladimir Putin overtly supported Yuschenko's rival, Viktor Yanukovych, and reacted angrily at the success of the Orange Revolution.<sup>127</sup> The Russian leadership was accused of assisting the Kuchma regime in conducting fraudulent elections, and of deploying Russian *spetsnaz* (special forces) units to parts of Ukraine in order to cause division and turbulence within the country.<sup>128</sup> These actions angered many Ukrainians, and likely assisted the pro-Western Yushchenko in winning the presidency.

Subsequently, after Yushchenko took office, Gazprom, the Russian government-controlled gas monopoly, began to demand sharp increases in the price of natural gas supplied to Ukraine.

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<sup>124</sup> Steven Woehrel, *Russian Energy Policy toward Neighboring Countries*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL34261 27 November 2007, 7.

<sup>125</sup> Roman Kupchinsky, "Is Ukraine on the Brink of an Energy Crisis?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:144 (29 July 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 7 October 2008).

<sup>126</sup> George H. Quester, "Energy Dependence and Political Power: Some Paradoxes," *Demokratizatsiya*, 22 September 2007, 448.

<sup>127</sup> Woehrel, *Russian Energy Policy toward Neighboring Countries*, 7.

<sup>128</sup> James Sherr, *Ukraine's Elections: The Forces In Play [1]* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, 25 November 2004), 2.

[I]n January 2006...Gazprom insisted on a more than fourfold increase in the price that it charges Ukraine for natural gas. When Ukraine balked at the demand, Russia cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine...leading also to cuts in gas supplies to Western Europe. The gas supplies were restored two days later after a new gas supply agreement was signed. In early 2007, with the more pro-Russian Yanukovych government in power, Russia and Ukraine agreed to gradually increase the price of Russian natural gas to Ukraine over the next five years, at which time it will reach the world market price.<sup>129</sup>

However, with the election of a pro-Western government headed by Yulia Tymoshenko in December 2007, natural gas disputes resurfaced. In March 2008, soon after her election as Prime Minister, Russia threatened to shut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine. The dispute was complicated. Quentin Peel, international affairs editor of the Financial Times, noted that:

[I]t is not so simple. Gazprom wants a stake in the Ukrainian market via an intermediary [RosUkrEnergo], and Yulia Tymoshenko, the Ukrainian Prime Minister who made a fortune in the gas business, wants to keep it out...And behind that spat lies the more fundamental problem: the Russians do not regard Ukraine as a serious independent country and the Ukrainians do not regard the Russians as trustworthy commercial counterparts. This is not just about gas. It is about sovereignty, respect and a lack of transparency in dealing with a very large amount of money.<sup>130</sup>

Coincidentally, just before this dispute, Ukrainian officials took a bold step toward NATO membership. As noted in Chapter II, in January 2008, “President Viktor Yushchenko, Speaker Arseniy Yatsenyuk and PM [Prime Minister] Yulia Tymoshenko wrote a letter to the NATO Secretary General to confirm Ukraine’s effort to join NATO MAP.”<sup>131</sup> It appears that Russia is consistently using energy prices as a tool to cause political turmoil and destabilize Ukraine. Speaking about the Russian interference and its

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<sup>129</sup> Steven Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL33460, 17 December 2007, 8.

<sup>130</sup> Quentin Peel, “This is Medvedev’s Chance for a Rhetorical Ceasefire,” *Financial Times*, 6 March 2008.

<sup>131</sup> Government of Ukraine, “Joining NATO MAP requires no drastic changes in relations with NATO, Foreign Ministry NATO Department’s press service informs,” *Web Portal of Ukrainian Government*, 17 January 2008. Available from [http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art\\_id=105929688](http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=105929688) (accessed 20 March 2008).

effects on Ukrainian politics, Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, chief of the SBU, the state security service, stated, “We are a young country. For any country it is dangerous when domestic politics is being interfered with by foreign sources.”<sup>132</sup>

Other forms of economic pressure may be applied by Russia on Ukraine. Russia is Ukraine’s largest trading partner. In recent years, key areas of Russian-Ukrainian trade have declined, such as military-technological cooperation. This has further “pushed” Ukraine away from Russia and has resulted in closer economic ties between Ukraine and the West.

The Ukrainian Prime Minister reported in March [2007] that military-technological cooperation with Russia has been declining from year to year. Both countries are looking for partners and potential customers elsewhere...After the election victory in 2004 of Viktor Yushchenko’s pro-Western coalition, Moscow became determined to create a new generation of armaments based on its own technological base and in association with either reliable partners within the CIS, or under strategic partnership arrangements with such major arms-importing customers as India or China.<sup>133</sup>

Speaking about Ukraine’s possible membership in NATO, Sergey Ivanov, then Russia’s Defense Minister, stated in 2006: “Regardless of whether we want this or not, it will have an inevitable impact one way or another on our relations, particularly on cooperation in the military-industrial sector and some other sectors.”<sup>134</sup> Energy disputes, decreased trade and Russian rhetoric will continue to “push” Ukraine away from Russia. According to James Sherr:

Ukraine’s fundamental problem with Russia remains. Its formal independence, its *nezavisimost’*, has been eminently acceptable to Russia’s largely pragmatic elites. But its *samostoyatel’nost’*—its ‘ability to stand’ apart from Russia has always been controversial, both as practical

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<sup>132</sup> Roman Olearchyk, “Ukraine security chief hits out at ‘danger’ of Russian interference,” *Financial Times*, 11 June 2008, 6. Available from: <http://proquest.umi.com> (accessed 01 September 2008).

<sup>133</sup> “Russia/Ukraine: Arms Cooperation Continues to Decline,” *Oxford Analytica*, 6 June 2007. Available from: <http://www.proquest.umi.com> (accessed 11 March 2008).

<sup>134</sup> “Russia’s Defense Minister: Ukraine’s joining NATO will affect bilateral relations,” *International Herald Tribune Europe*, 7 December 2006.

possibility and as a basis for cooperation. In the Yeltsin years, cooperation was predicated on integration; under Putin, it has been predicated on recognition of Russia's primacy.<sup>135</sup>

Russian nationalism and chauvinism have forced Ukraine to react. Membership in NATO could bolster its position vis à vis Russia. Throughout the first decade of independence, Presidents Kravchuk and Kuchma stressed that expansion of NATO had to take Russian opinions into account. However, President Yushchenko does not feel obligated to do likewise.

Despite centuries of subjugating Ukraine politically, socially and economically, Russia feels betrayed that Ukraine is seeking membership in NATO. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stated that "the acceptance into NATO of Ukraine...will mean a colossal geopolitical shift, and we assess such steps from the point of view of our interests."<sup>136</sup> Soon after these comments, "by a vote of 435 to 0...the [Russian] State Duma adopted a resolution criticizing Ukraine's plans to join NATO and stating that this would 'lead to very negative consequences for relations between our fraternal peoples.'"<sup>137</sup>

Many Russians share this fraternal sense of betrayal. Victor Kremenyuk, the deputy director of the Institute for North American studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, stated "Historically, both peoples were one nation with one language, one religion, one culture."<sup>138</sup> According to Alexander Solzhenitsyn, NATO expansion "was especially painful in the case of Ukraine, a country whose closeness to Russia is defined by literally millions of family ties among our peoples, relatives living on different sides of the national border. At one fell stroke, these families could be torn apart by a new dividing line, the border of a military bloc."<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Sherr, *At the Crossroads or The Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine's Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, 4.

<sup>136</sup> Lavrov quoted in John Kriendler, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, July 2007), 11.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>138</sup> Victor Kremenyuk, *Conflicts In and Around Russia: Nation-Building in Difficult Times* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 116.

<sup>139</sup> Spiegel Interview with Alexander Solzhenitsyn, July 23, 2007. Available from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,druck-496211,00.html>. (accessed 3 August 2008).

Another dimension of the Russian sense of betrayal is geographical in nature. Many Russians believe that the territory occupied by present-day Ukraine is a result of Russian territorial expansion. “In Moscow’s view, contemporary Ukraine’s border—drawn by Joseph Stalin and Nikita Khrushchev as an administrative frontier between Soviet provinces—stretched far beyond historical Ukraine’s outer limits, incorporating millions of Russians and creating ethnic, linguistic, and political tensions.”<sup>140</sup> The territory “gained” by Ukraine under Soviet rule included resource-rich areas such as Donetsk, known for its coal deposits, and the Crimean Peninsula, which was “presented” (some Russians say illegally) to Ukraine in 1954 by Khrushchev and which is home to the Russian Black Sea Fleet.

Russia’s hostile view of NATO expansion into former Soviet republics, combined with Ukraine’s “betrayal” by seeking membership in NATO, could result in several outcomes.<sup>141</sup> “On February 14, 2008, in response to a question about possible Ukrainian membership in NATO, President Putin warned that Russia might be forced to take military countermeasures, including aiming missiles against Ukraine, if Kiev hosted foreign bases or joined the U.S. missile defense project.”<sup>142</sup> According to James Sherr, “The prospect of NATO membership for Ukraine...would be deeply disturbing to Russia’s Armed Forces.”<sup>143</sup> Russian leaders view NATO expansion eastward as an encirclement of Russia by NATO. Dmitri Peskov, a Kremlin spokesman, stated in 2006 that the drive to surround Russia with NATO will “demand countermeasures.”<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Dimitri Simes, “Losing Russia: The Costs of Renewed Confrontation,” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2007, p. 5.

<sup>141</sup> Paul Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL34415, 18 April 2008, 25.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>143</sup> Sherr, *Ukraine’s Elections: The Forces in Play* (1), 1.

<sup>144</sup> Peskov quoted in “Europe: Surrounding Russia; Georgia, Ukraine and NATO,” *The Economist*, 17 June 2006, 45. Available from <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed 20 March 2008).

Russian military leaders have in the recent past viewed NATO as the major threat to their national security. “Throughout the 1990s, Russia’s top military leaders stubbornly clung to their position that NATO was the greatest threat to the homeland.”<sup>145</sup> Some of this thinking may still exist in the Russian leadership today. In April 2008, “Chief of the Russian General Staff Yuriy Baluyevsky warned that Russia would take military and ‘other measures’ if Ukraine joined NATO.”<sup>146</sup> In August 2008, the Russian military invaded Georgia, a former Soviet republic seeking NATO membership. This prompted Richard Holbrooke, a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, to say that “[Prime Minister] Putin’s next target will be Ukraine.”<sup>147</sup>

In addition to aiming missiles at Ukraine or utilizing military force, Russia could provoke pro-Russian elements of Ukrainian society to incite conflict by encouraging autonomy or separation from Ukraine. The most likely targets of such a provocation would be in Eastern Ukraine and the Crimean peninsula, both of which have a large proportion of ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians among their populations. This is consistent with comments that Vladimir Putin, then still president, made at the April 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit:

Putin warned that if Georgia and Ukraine moved toward NATO membership, Russia might respond by recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia’s secession from Georgia and by instigating a partition of Ukraine. According to a witness account, Putin told Bush that Ukraine was “not a real nation,” that much of its territory had been “given away” by Russia, and that Ukraine would “cease to exist as a state” if it joined NATO. In that case, Putin hinted, Russia would encourage secession of the Crimea and eastern regions of Ukraine.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Steven E. Miller and Dmitri Trenin, *The Russian Military: Power and Policy* (Cambridge, MA.: The MIT Press, 2004), 67.

<sup>146</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 26.

<sup>147</sup> Richard Holbrooke quoted on Ukrainian website. “Putin’s Next Target will be Ukraine,” 11 August 2008. Available from: <http://www.unian.net/eng/news/news-266463.html> (accessed 1 September 2008).

<sup>148</sup> Vladimir Socor, “Moscow Makes Furious but Empty Threats to Georgia and Ukraine,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:70 (14 April 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 9 May 2008).

Putin went on to discuss “how present-day Ukraine, in its current borders, was formed, [and recalled] the contradictions between western Ukraine and its eastern and southeastern regions. He said that what was being done to draw Ukraine into NATO would not facilitate the important task of helping Ukraine maintain its unity.”<sup>149</sup>

According to James Sherr, “Eastern Ukraine is a region that many in the West have considered lost and that many more in Russia have considered *nash* (ours).”<sup>150</sup> However, Sherr explains that the threat of the secession of eastern Ukraine is a distant prospect for two reasons. “First, it was plainly a manoeuvre from the top which lacked grass roots support. Second, the Donetsk power structures themselves, who are in sharp competition with Russian business interests, understand that secession would make them almost entirely dependent on Russia.”<sup>151</sup> In sum, the attitude of eastern Ukrainians is sympathetic to the Russian people and culture, not to the Russian government. After centuries of suppression, they prefer their Ukrainian sovereignty over a return to Russian economic, social and political subjugation.

The Crimean peninsula, on the other hand, may be a different matter. In the words of Anatol Lieven, “the emotional and political problems surrounding Sevastopol and Crimea are rather different from problems related to other Ukrainian regions, and they give rise to different dangers.”<sup>152</sup> The danger that Lieven refers to is the possibility of Crimean secession from Ukraine. In July 2008, Leonid Grach, the Crimean KPU (Ukrainian Communist Party) leader, “threatened to support the peninsula’s secession from Ukraine if it joined NATO.”<sup>153</sup>

Crimea is an emotional issue for Russians. According to Stuart Goldman, a specialist in Russian and Eurasian affairs for the Congressional Research Service:

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<sup>149</sup> Vladimir Socor, “Moscow Makes Furious but Empty Threats to Georgia and Ukraine.”

<sup>150</sup> James Sherr, *Ukraine: Prospects and Risks* (Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, October 2006), 7.

<sup>151</sup> James Sherr, *Ukraine’s Elections: The Forces in Play (III)*, (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, 2 December 2004), 1.

<sup>152</sup> Lieven, *Russia and Ukraine: A Fraternal Rivalry*, 106.

<sup>153</sup> Taras Kuzio, “Ukrainian Government Expresses Strong Support for Georgia,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:154 (12 August 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 9 May 2008).

Many Russians view it [Crimea] as historically part of Russia, and say it was illegally “given” to Ukraine by Khrushchev in 1954...In April 1992, the Russian legislature declared the 1954 transfer of Crimea illegal. Later that year Russia and Ukraine agreed that Crimea was “an integral part of Ukraine” but would have economic autonomy and the right to enter into social, economic, and cultural relations with other states.<sup>154</sup>

Crimea in fact retains strong ties to Russia economically, socially and politically. The Crimean economy is dependent on Russia for trade and tourism. Also, a majority of the Crimean population consists of ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians who are sympathetic to Russia. The combination of these factors exacerbates tensions between Crimea and Kyiv when the issue of NATO membership is discussed by the government. As discussed in Chapter II, Crimea and Sevastopol in particular have been home to numerous anti-NATO protests. There have been multiple protests of the annual multinational military exercise hosted by Ukraine in Crimea named “Sea Breeze.” In May 2008, “Anti-NATO activists attacked a pro-NATO rally in Simferopol, the capital of Crimea...demolishing the opponents’ tents, throwing eggs, and pouring milk and juice over them. The anti-NATO mob also burned a NATO flag before TV cameras.”<sup>155</sup> Furthermore, the Simferopol city council issued an edict in July 2008 declaring Simferopol a “territory free from NATO.”<sup>156</sup>

After the Russian military invaded Georgia in August 2008, Pavel Korduban, an analyst for the Eurasia region with the Jamestown Foundation, stated that “In theory, Russia could use the presence of its citizens in Crimea as a pretext for a conflict with

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<sup>154</sup> Stuart D. Goldman, *Russian Political, Economic, and Security Issues and U.S. Interests* Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL33407, 4 March 2008, 14.

<sup>155</sup> Pavel Korduban, “Will NATO become Popular among Ukrainians?” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:111 (11 June 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 21 June 2008).

<sup>156</sup> Kuzio, “Ukrainian Government Expresses Strong Support for Georgia.”

Ukraine, like it did in South Ossetia [M]any Crimean residents also reportedly have Russian citizenship. It has been claimed that Russian citizenship has been extended to as many as 170,000 Crimean residents.”<sup>157</sup>

As mentioned previously, Sevastopol is also home to the Russian Black Sea Fleet. In 1997, an agreement was reached between Ukraine and Russia for the fleet to remain in Sevastopol until 2017, with Russia leasing the port facilities from Ukraine. However, according to Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky, a commander in the Russian Navy, “Russia has never made a secret of its desire to retain its presence in Sevastopol after 2017.”<sup>158</sup> President Yushchenko is adamant that Russia remove its Black Sea fleet at the expiration of its lease in 2017. In July 2008, he stated that “The start of negotiations on the removal of Russia’s Black Sea fleet from Ukrainian territory should be included in the agenda of our relations.”<sup>159</sup>

The debate over the presence of the Russian fleet has intensified since the August 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia. When Russian Navy ships were sent from Sevastopol to Abkhazia’s coast, Ukrainian officials warned that Kyiv might take measures to prevent the ships from returning to their base in Sevastopol. Later, however, this threat was withdrawn by a Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesman.<sup>160</sup> “Yushchenko subsequently issued a controversial decree apparently aimed both at saving face for Kyiv and at avoiding open confrontation with Russia. The decree required the RBSF [Russian Black Sea Fleet] to agree on any future movement of its ships with the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry. Russia rejected the decree.”<sup>161</sup>

Some analysts believe that the Russian Black Sea fleet’s presence in Crimea is a key issue in determining whether NATO will accept Ukraine’s bid for membership. According to Steve Larrabee of the Rand Corporation, “Russians want to keep their fleet

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<sup>157</sup> Pavel Korduban, “Kyiv on Georgia: Diplomacy Awkward, Parties Divided,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:157 (15 August 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 1 October 2008).

<sup>158</sup> Svitlana Korenovska, “Crimea’s Port Dispute,” *The Washington Times*, 31 July 2008, B1.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., B1.

<sup>160</sup> Korduban, “Kyiv on Georgia: Diplomacy Awkward, Parties Divided.”

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

there to maintain the presence, which in a way is a kind of leverage to exert on Ukraine and to keep their finger on the pulse. As long as the [Russian] fleet is there, there's little likelihood that NATO would bring Ukraine into the alliance...Most of the [NATO] members would be afraid to bring Ukraine there with the Russian presence on Ukrainian soil.”<sup>162</sup> NATO is aware of the symbolic importance that Russia places on Crimea, and is careful not to underestimate this. “Markian Bilynskyj, vice president of the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation, says Russia’s naval presence in Ukraine is potentially more divisive than U.S. plans to set up a missile defense [system] in Poland and the Czech Republic, both NATO members.”<sup>163</sup>

The Sevastopol port could offer NATO a strategic location for its assets. According to John Daly, a Eurasian foreign affairs and defense policy analyst for the Jamestown Foundation, “If Ukraine joins NATO, well, the alliance gets access to a port on Russia’s underbelly.”<sup>164</sup> However, Russia and pro-Russian elements in Crimea are adamant about Crimea staying out of NATO, even if it means secession.

Another possible, and the most likely, Russian response to Ukrainian membership in NATO is to exploit the close economic ties between the two countries. According to James Sherr, Ukraine is “in a weak position vis à vis Russia, which continues to use the gas price as a lever to extract strategic concessions.”<sup>165</sup> By January 2009, Ukraine will most likely be paying Russia’s Gazprom \$400 per 1,000 cubic meters for natural gas. It currently pays \$179 per 1,000 cubic meters.<sup>166</sup> The issue is whether Ukraine can afford to pay the new price.

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<sup>162</sup> Korenovska, B1.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., B1.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., B1.

<sup>165</sup> Sherr, *Ukraine: Prospects and Risks*, 1.

<sup>166</sup> Roman Kupchinsky, “Is Ukraine on the Brink of an Energy Crisis?” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:144 (29 July 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 12 September 2008).

In June 2008, Ukrainian Prime Minister Tymoshenko had a meeting with Russian Prime Minister Putin to discuss the price increase of natural gas. At this meeting, “Putin promised to distribute the price increase over a five-year span.”<sup>167</sup> During this period, Ukraine could conceivably improve upon its energy-inefficient ways or seek alternative sources of energy in response to the price increase. However, if the Ukrainian government continues its pro-NATO policies, Russia could respond by cutting off natural gas supplies to Ukraine or sharply increasing the price, as it did in 2006. Another sharp price increase could significantly affect the Ukrainian political situation, since presidential elections are slated for 2009. According to Roman Kupchinsky, a Eurasian affairs analyst for the Jamestown Foundation:

Nonetheless, if the increase is not modified, Viktor Yanukovych, the leader of the Party of the Regions, will in all probability benefit most and be elected president. Gazprom and the Kremlin might be tempted to play the “gas card” in order to see Yanukovych elected and to gain control — if not direct ownership — of the Ukrainian trunk gas pipeline, a long-time objective of Russian policy...With a possible debt of over \$10 billion by late 2009, the new Ukrainian government might be forced to sell the pipeline to Gazprom — as well as a substantial part of its industrial base, maintain the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol and renounce its intention to join NATO.<sup>168</sup>

Such a geopolitical move would be consistent with past actions by the Russian government, and it would be consistent with official Russian policy. “The first paragraph of the official (2003) *Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020* defines the country’s fuel and energy complex as an ‘instrument for the conduct of internal and external policy’, adding that ‘the role of the country in world energy markets to a large extent determines its geopolitical influence’.”<sup>169</sup>

On the other hand, such a move could further push some pro-Russian elements of the population away from Russian influence. “Voters in Eastern Ukraine could lose some

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<sup>167</sup> Kupchinsky, “Is Ukraine on the Brink of an Energy Crisis?”

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Sherr, *At the Crossroads or the Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine’s Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, 6.

of their pro-Russian enthusiasm if higher gas prices lead to wide-scale unemployment in their region. Some would place the blame on Russia for ‘squeezing’ Ukraine — and them — into an economic crisis.”<sup>170</sup>

Another possible Russian response could be ultimate acceptance of Ukrainian membership in NATO. According to Paul Gallis of the Congressional Research Service:

[A]fter complaining loudly, Russia would grudgingly accept NATO membership for Ukraine, as it did in the case of the Baltic states, Poland, and other countries in Central Europe. Many observers believe that this outcome may be less likely due to the particular sensitivity of Ukraine to Russians, many of whom believe the country should be closely tied to Russia, as much of it has been from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until 1991.<sup>171</sup>

Such a response would not be consistent with chauvinistic Russian actions toward Ukraine in the past. Nor would it be consistent with the views of the current Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev. He stated in June 2008 that if NATO further expanded its membership in Eastern Europe, “There would not be confrontation, but the price would be high.”<sup>172</sup>

In conclusion, centuries of Russian economic, social, and political subjugation have stiffened the resolve of Ukraine to seek integration with the West. NATO membership is a key foreign policy goal of the current Yushchenko government. “Ukraine defines a ‘European choice’ as the central pillar of its foreign policy, but it is constrained by a legacy of backwardness, and by a complex relationship with its Russian neighbor.”<sup>173</sup>

Russia adamantly opposes NATO membership for Ukraine, and will most likely apply further economic, social or political pressure against Ukraine if its government continues to pursue membership against Russian wishes. At the April 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated that Russia would do

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<sup>170</sup> Kupchinsky, “Is Ukraine on the Brink of an Energy Crisis?”

<sup>171</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 26.

<sup>172</sup> Hugh Williamson, “Medvedev takes tough line on global security,” *Financial Times*, 6 June 2008, 6. Available from: [www.proquest.umi.com](http://www.proquest.umi.com) (accessed 9 July 2008).

<sup>173</sup> Craig Nation, *NATO’s Relations with Russia and Ukraine* (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, June 2000), 5.

“everything possible” to prevent NATO membership for Ukraine.<sup>174</sup> Possible scenarios include military countermeasures, energy and trade restrictions or cutoffs, or the instigation of the partitioning of Ukraine. One final scenario, not discussed in this chapter, could involve Russia putting pressure on NATO members not to extend membership to Ukraine. This possibility, and the influence of NATO members on Ukraine’s NATO aspiration, is discussed further in Chapter IV.

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<sup>174</sup> Socor, “Moscow Makes Furious but Empty Threats to Georgia and Ukraine.”

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#### IV. THE NATO INFLUENCE ON UKRAINE'S NATO ASPIRATION

As mentioned previously, Ukraine has a résumé of achievements in its dealings with NATO. Relations formally began in 1991, when Ukraine became a founding member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), which became the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in 1997. In 1994, Ukraine became the first Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) member to join NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP).<sup>175</sup> As long ago as 1997, Tor Bukkvoll, a Norwegian scholar, wrote that "Ukraine is giving high priority to participation in the PfP program and is considered to be one of the most eager participants."<sup>176</sup> The Ukrainian military has participated in notable PfP exercises such as: "Cooperative Osprey," "The Shield of Peace," "Cooperative Neighbor" and "Sea Breeze." Also, Ukrainian peacekeepers were active in the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) operations in Bosnia, and Ukrainian troops are participating in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) operation.

Ukraine's relationship with NATO was strengthened with the signing of the "Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine" in 1997. This Charter "established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) and identified areas for consultation and cooperation."<sup>177</sup> The NATO website explains the importance of the NUC:

The NATO-Ukraine Commission, established by the Charter, has served as a forum for regular consultations on issues of mutual interest. The Commission has provided a valuable framework for the development of mutually beneficial practical defence and military, scientific,

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<sup>175</sup> John Kriendl, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends* (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, July 2007), 2. Available from [http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/cee/07\(23\)JK.pdf](http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/cee/07(23)JK.pdf) (accessed 12 January 2008).

<sup>176</sup> Tor Bukkvoll, "Ukraine and NATO: The Politics of Soft Cooperation," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 1997.

<sup>177</sup> Grigoriy M. Perepelytsia, "NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads," *Military Technology*, Vol. 32, Issue 1, Jan 2008, 240.

environmental and economic cooperation. This cooperative format has allowed Ukraine to benefit from NATO's experience and assistance in the conduct of ambitious reforms.<sup>178</sup>

Furthermore, a "NATO-Ukraine Action Plan" was adopted in November 2002. Grigoriy M. Perepelytsia, a Ukrainian expert, explained the significance of the Action Plan as follows:

The Action Plan aims to deepen and broaden the NATO-Ukraine relationship and to support Ukraine's reform efforts on the road towards full integration in Euro-Atlantic structures. It sets out specific objectives, covering political and economic issues; security, defence and military issues; information issues; and legal issues. These objectives are supported by Annual Target Plans in which Ukraine sets its own targets for the activities it intends to pursue both internally and in cooperation with NATO. The Action Plan itself will not lead directly to membership. However, its successful implementation is regarded as a precursor to an invitation to join NATO's Membership Action Plan, and would help Ukraine move towards meeting the requirements expected of a candidate for NATO membership.<sup>179</sup>

Another milestone for NATO-Ukraine relations occurred in April 2005, soon after the "Orange Revolution." An "Intensified Dialogue" on NATO membership for Ukraine was launched, coinciding with a package of short-term actions to enhance NATO-Ukraine cooperation. In Perepelytsia's words:

The aim of this [Intensified] dialogue is to give Ukrainian officials the opportunity to learn more about what would be expected of Ukraine as a potential member of the Alliance, while simultaneously letting NATO examine Ukrainian reforms and capabilities. In parallel with the launch of the Intensified Dialogue, the Ukrainian and Allied foreign ministers agreed [upon] a package of short-term actions to help Ukraine in moving the reform process forward. This package covered a range of areas.<sup>180</sup>

According to the NATO website, this package included: strengthening democratic institutions, renewing political dialogue, reinvigorating cooperation in defense and

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<sup>178</sup> "Joint statement, NATO-Ukraine Commission meeting – 9 July 2007." Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2007/p07-082e.html> (accessed 13 October 2008).

<sup>179</sup> Perepelytsia, "NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads," 240.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

security reform, improving and targeting public diplomacy efforts, and enhancing support to address the socio-economic impact of defense reform.<sup>181</sup>

The next step for Ukraine is to receive a Membership Application Plan (MAP) from NATO. A MAP is a major achievement for an aspiring country. As noted in Chapter II, Perepelytsia has put the importance of a NATO MAP into perspective:

In the MAP framework, Annual National Programmes are developed which focus on a number of requirements for aspirant countries, including in the political, economic, resource, legal and security fields. Aspirant countries are expected to demonstrate a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy; fair treatment of minority populations; commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes with neighbours; the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance; and a commitment to democratic civil-military relations and structures.<sup>182</sup>

Steven Pifer, a senior advisor for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, offers another perspective regarding a NATO MAP:

Membership action plans thus serve as roadmaps to guide prospective NATO members. The process is open-ended: there is no fixed schedule for completing it, and receiving a MAP does not guarantee an automatic invitation for membership. The decision to extend an invitation is a separate political decision, taken by Alliance members after they have reviewed a country's progress on its MAP. A MAP process aims to create the preconditions for consideration of membership. While the presumption is that it will lead to membership, a MAP does not prejudge a country's decision on extending an invitation.<sup>183</sup>

At the April 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit, the Ukrainian government hoped to receive a NATO MAP. However, the NATO Allies chose not to offer a MAP to Ukraine. Still, the Allies expressed support for Ukraine's MAP application, and offered encouraging comments about Ukraine's NATO bid. Regarding Ukraine's membership aspirations, NATO officials issued the following statement at the Bucharest Summit:

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<sup>181</sup> "Enhancing NATO-Ukraine Cooperation Short-term Actions," 21 April 2005. Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2005/p05042le.htm> (accessed 13 October 2008).

<sup>182</sup> Perepelytsia, "NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads," 242.

<sup>183</sup> Steven Pifer, "Statement before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Ukraine and NATO at the Bucharest Summit," 4 March 2008. Available from [http://www.csis.org/media/congress/ts\\_080303\\_pifer.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/congress/ts_080303_pifer.pdf) (accessed 14 October 2008).

NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations. We welcome the democratic reforms in Ukraine and Georgia...MAP is the next step for Ukraine and Georgia on their direct way to membership. Today we make clear that we support these countries' applications for MAP. Therefore we will now begin a period of intensive engagement with both at a high political level to address the questions still outstanding pertaining to their MAP applications. We have asked Foreign Ministers to make a first assessment of progress at their December 2008 meeting. Foreign Ministers have the authority to decide on the MAP applications of Ukraine and Georgia.<sup>184</sup>

This declaration was a large step forward for Ukraine's membership prospects, particularly when compared to the statement issued at the 2006 NATO Riga Summit. In the Riga Summit Declaration the Allies reaffirmed the importance of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, and thanked Ukraine for its participation in NATO-led operations and its efforts to promote regional cooperation. The Allies also promised to continue to assist Ukraine with its reform efforts.<sup>185</sup> However, the Bucharest Summit Declaration all but assured Ukraine NATO membership at some point with the statement: "We agreed today that these countries [Ukraine and Georgia] will become members of NATO."<sup>186</sup>

Still, despite its résumé of achievements and cooperation with NATO, Ukraine was not offered MAP status at the Bucharest Summit. In spite of strong U.S. support for Ukraine's MAP application, "Key European NATO Allies were reluctant to consider a MAP for Ukraine because they feel that Ukraine's qualifications for a MAP are weak, and in part because they are concerned about damaging relations with Russia."<sup>187</sup> Germany and France in particular are "key" European Allies who oppose a NATO MAP for Ukraine in current circumstances. "On March 6 [2008], German Foreign Minister

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<sup>184</sup> "Bucharest Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008," par. 23. Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html> (accessed 5 October 2008).

<sup>185</sup> "Riga Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Riga on 29 November 2006." Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm> (accessed 13 October 2008).

<sup>186</sup> Bucharest Summit Declaration, par 23.

<sup>187</sup> Paul Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL34415, 18 April 2008, 25.

Frank-Walter Steinmeier said, ‘I cannot hide my skepticism’ about Ukraine’s chances for a MAP. At the [March 2008] NATO foreign ministers’ meeting, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and other European leaders stressed the need for maintaining good relations with Moscow.”<sup>188</sup>

According to a study published by the Brookings Institution in 2008:

In the end, a number of European members blocked consensus [for Ukraine’s MAP] for three reasons: (1) the low level of public support in Ukraine for joining NATO; (2) the strained cohabitation between President Yushchenko and the presidential administration, on the one hand, and Prime Minister Tymoshenko and the cabinet, on the other; and (3) the possible Russian reaction.<sup>189</sup>

Therefore, it appears that some members of the Alliance do not believe Ukraine is ready for NATO membership, while some members do not wish to provoke negative Russian reactions.

#### **A. ALLEGEDLY WEAK QUALIFICATIONS**

Allegedly “weak qualifications,” from the viewpoint of some NATO Allies, appear to have been a factor in their decision-making about Ukraine receiving a MAP. Steven Pifer noted the qualifications that NATO members examine prior to granting membership to an aspiring country:

Since launching the enlargement process in the 1990s, NATO has asked two sets of questions of prospective members. First, has the country in question implemented the political, economic, military and security reforms necessary to bring it into compliance with NATO standards? Has the country’s political-economic system embraced the democratic and market economy values of the Alliance? This reflects the fact that NATO is not just a security alliance but is also an alliance of shared values. Second, can the country make a contribution to Euro-Atlantic security? Does it have the capabilities and the political will to use them that will strengthen the Alliance’s ability to meet the challenges currently before it?<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 25.

<sup>189</sup> Steven Pifer, “Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest,” 6 October 2008. Available from [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0506\\_ukraine\\_pifer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0506_ukraine_pifer.aspx) (accessed 5 October 2008).

<sup>190</sup> Pifer, “Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest.”

Pifer believes that Ukraine presents a persuasive case for obtaining a MAP. Regarding its political situation, he states that

It [Ukraine] has implemented significant reforms since regaining independence in 1991. As for political transformation, Ukraine is the only former Soviet state other than the Baltic nations to achieve a Freedom House ranking of “free,” which it did in 2005, 2006, and 2007. Democratic elections have become the norm. Ukraine has held three national ballots over the past three years...that were assessed by Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other monitors to be free, fair and competitive...The country, moreover, boasts an increasingly professional and independent media that is unafraid to challenge power. Non-governmental organizations have flourished and have had real impact.

The statements by Pifer make a positive case for Ukraine. However, as noted in Chapter II, issues in the political sphere constitute one of the main factors inhibiting Ukraine’s NATO aspiration. Corruption is still a major problem in Ukraine. Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Ukraine 118 out of 179 countries.<sup>191</sup> Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter II, Janusz Bugajski, director of the New European Democracies Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, has identified four areas of governance in which Ukraine must make progress to support its pursuit of Euro-Atlantic integration. These four areas are constitutional reform, judicial reform, administrative reform, and greater transparency and responsiveness.<sup>192</sup>

Also, political instability in the Ukrainian government may prevent Ukraine from receiving a MAP. In September 2008, President Yushchenko’s party, Our Ukraine-People’s Self Defense, withdrew from a coalition with Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko’s party, the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, after disagreements over domestic and international policies. As Pavel Korduban, an analyst for the Eurasia region with the Jamestown Foundation, pointed out, “If no new coalition emerges within 30 days,

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<sup>191</sup> Janusz Bugajski, “Ukraine: A Net Assessment of 16 Years of Independence,” (Washington D.C.: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, February 2008), 14.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 22.

Yushchenko will be entitled to disband parliament and call a new election.”<sup>193</sup> On 9 October 2008, Yushchenko followed through and disbanded the Ukrainian parliament. A new parliamentary election will be held in December 2008, which will be the third such election since the 2004 Orange Revolution.

Yushchenko’s popularity is declining among Ukrainians. As a result, the Party of Regions, headed by Viktor Yanukovych, may gain more seats in parliament in a new election. The Party of Regions is already Ukraine’s biggest political party, and largely opposes NATO membership. Yanukovych has stated that the Ukrainian parliament will not consider legislation for NATO membership until a public referendum has approved the pursuit of this membership.<sup>194</sup> A poll conducted in May 2008 by the Kyiv-based Sofia think-tank “showed that only 21.4 percent of Ukrainians are inclined to support NATO membership and 53 percent of those polled approved of the April failure to secure a MAP.”<sup>195</sup>

The disintegration of Ukraine’s ruling coalition in September 2008 and consistently low domestic support for NATO membership will continue to send the signal to NATO members that Ukraine is not ready for a MAP. These setbacks may reinforce their reasons for not granting Ukraine a MAP in Bucharest.

According to Pifer, another factor that NATO Allies consider in their decision to grant membership to an aspiring country is the ability of that country’s economy to integrate with NATO standards. Again, Pifer made a persuasive case for Ukraine. In his words:

Ukraine has also made major progress on economic reform. It reversed the decline that devastated the economy during the 1990s and has achieved eight consecutive years of economic growth. Growth has averaged between six and seven percent per year, one of the most impressive growth rates in Europe or the former Soviet Union...Ukraine has put the basic institutions of a market economy in place and has begun

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<sup>193</sup> Pavel Korduban, “New Coalition or Early Elections for Ukraine,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:178 (17 September 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 9 October 2008).

<sup>194</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 24.

<sup>195</sup> Pavel Korduban, “Will NATO become Popular among Ukrainians?” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:111 (11 June 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 8 August 2008).

to draw substantial foreign investment. The private sector now accounts for two-thirds of gross domestic product. Ukraine's trade patterns have increasingly oriented themselves toward European markets.<sup>196</sup>

Ukraine also became a member of the World Trade Organization in 2008.

However, despite its record of positive economic performance and significant reform, several issues loom within Ukraine's economy that may cast doubt on its qualifications and readiness for a MAP in the eyes of some NATO Allies. According to the 2008 Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom:

Ukraine's economy is 51.1 percent free, according to our 2008 assessment, which makes it the world's 133rd freest economy. Its overall score is 0.6 percentage point lower than last year. Ukraine is ranked 39th out of 41 countries in the European region, and its overall score is much lower than the regional average...Ukraine is very weak in business freedom, government size, monetary freedom, investment freedom, property rights, and freedom from corruption. Inflation is high, and government expenditures equal nearly two-fifths of GDP. While foreign investment is officially welcomed, corruption and regulations are deterrents to capital. The judiciary does not always enforce contracts and is tarnished with corruption. Corruption is a major problem throughout the civil service, and bureaucratic inefficiency makes many commercial operations difficult...Despite lucrative opportunities for foreign direct investment, economic progress in the near term may be slowed by persistent corruption, steadily increasing gas prices, deteriorating infrastructure, and political uncertainty.<sup>197</sup>

Furthermore, Ukraine has been criticized by prominent world banking institutions for its slow progress in key areas of economic reform. According to the website of The Fund for Peace, "Despite some reforms, Ukraine was still criticized by the IMF and World Bank for not speeding the pace of structural reforms aimed at reducing its shadow economy and encouraging more foreign direct investment."<sup>198</sup> It appears that Ukraine may require more time to implement key economic reforms.

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<sup>196</sup> Pifer, "Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest."

<sup>197</sup> 2008 Index of Economic Freedom, *Heritage Foundation*. Available from <http://www.heritage.org/research/features/index/country.cfm?id=Ukraine> (accessed 15 October 2008).

<sup>198</sup> The Fund for Peace, Ukraine country profile. Available from [http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=17&Itemid=80](http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=17&Itemid=80) (accessed 16 October 2008).

Another aspect of Ukraine's economy that may negatively affect its NATO aspiration is its debt to Russia. Ukraine's debt to Gazprom, Russia's state-owned gas company, has consistently been around \$1 billion per year.<sup>199</sup> Some experts believe that Russian leaders may use the debt to influence Ukrainian political leaders, and ultimately to block Ukraine's NATO aspirations. As noted previously, Roman Kupchinsky, a Eurasian affairs analyst for the Jamestown Foundation, stated:

Gazprom and the Kremlin might be tempted to play the "gas card" in order to see Yanukovych elected and to gain control — if not direct ownership — of the Ukrainian trunk gas pipeline, a long-time objective of Russian policy... With a possible debt of over \$10 billion by late 2009, the new Ukrainian government might be forced to sell the pipeline to Gazprom — as well as a substantial part of its industrial base, maintain the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol and renounce its intention to join NATO.<sup>200</sup>

At the December 2008 NATO Foreign Ministers meeting, the NATO Allies will probably take the ability of Ukraine to meet Euro-Atlantic economic standards into consideration when deciding whether to award Ukraine MAP status. If economic progress has not been made since the April 2008 Bucharest Summit, it may negatively affect Ukraine's NATO MAP aspiration.

Finally, Pifer also stated that during the application process, NATO Allies examine an aspiring country's ability to reform to meet NATO military and security standards. NATO is an alliance of countries that provide for their own collective defense and undertake operations in support of collective security. According to some experts, military and security reform could be the strongest areas in Ukraine's NATO membership portfolio. In Pifer's words:

Ukraine likewise has made important strides in restructuring its military, moving from a large, Soviet-style army in 1991 to a much smaller, more mobile force that increasingly is configured to meet Ukraine's current security challenges and comply with NATO standards. Over the past 15 years, Ukrainian forces have acquired considerable experience in joint

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<sup>199</sup> Roman Kupchinsky, "Is Ukraine on the Brink of an Energy Crisis?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:144, (29 July 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 13 August 2008).

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

operations with NATO and American forces...Furthermore, Ukraine has demonstrated that it has serious military capabilities and the political will to use them. Ukrainian transport aircraft have provided strategic airlift to NATO forces...Ukrainian forces have participated alongside NATO and American troops in Balkan peacekeeping operations, such as in Bosnia and Kosovo. Ukraine deployed a chemical and biological weapons defense unit to Kuwait in 2003 and three battalions to Iraq in 2003-2005, making it at one point the fourth largest troop contributor to the coalition. Ukraine's military assets would make it a net contributor to Euro-Atlantic security.<sup>201</sup>

Furthermore, in the areas of military and security reform, NATO Allies may also take note of various successful demilitarization projects in Ukraine. Several projects have been conducted in Ukraine through the Partnership for Peace Trust Fund, and these projects have helped Ukraine eliminate large stockpiles of surplus and obsolete munitions. Grigoriy Perepelytsia described two such projects:

A first project, launched in Donetsk in 2002 while Viktor Yanukovych was governor there, safely destroyed 400,000 anti-personnel landmines. A second project – the largest single demilitarisation project of its kind in the world – aims to destroy 133,000 tons of conventional munitions, 1.5 million small arms and light weapons, and 1,000 man-portable air defence systems over twelve years.<sup>202</sup>

In sum, Ukraine has indicated to the NATO Allies that it has the motivation and capability to reform its military and security sectors to conform to NATO standards.

However, some experts believe that the Ukrainian military establishment is not quite yet ready to be a NATO contributor. According to a 2007 study by Marybeth Peterson Ulrich of the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College:

The Ukrainian armed forces have been on a starvation diet, recently receiving only 1.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Ukraine ranks...127<sup>th</sup> out of 150 countries worldwide in expenditure per serviceman.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Pifer, "Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest."

<sup>202</sup> Perepelytsia, "NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads," 242.

<sup>203</sup> Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, *Ukraine's Military Between East and West*, (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, May 2007), vii.

Furthermore, according to Natalie Mychajlyszyn, an assistant professor in the political science department at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada:

Financial problems are at the heart of many of Ukraine's problems with military reforms in general and the operationalization of its military doctrine and policy in particular...Moreover, without greater funding, professionalization of the military is delayed, prolonging dependence on inadequate and low quality conscripts...In sum, inadequate finances have resulted in low morale, a poorly prepared military force, and a low level of prestige, which ultimately hamper efforts to reform the military and to address the problems.<sup>204</sup>

In fact, even Ukrainian citizens do not hold their military's capabilities in the highest regard. "A recent [September 2008] poll by the Ukrainian Strategic Studies Institute found that 57 percent of those polled did not believe that Ukraine was capable of defending its territorial integrity and independence by itself."<sup>205</sup> Furthermore, some Ukrainian experts are concerned about the future of the country's military-industrial complex if Ukraine becomes a member of NATO. "Some Ukrainian politicians and economists are also worried that Ukrainian NATO accession could ruin or significantly damage the country's military-industrial complex. They argue that the country's defense industries will become obsolete after the military switches to weapons and military technologies used by NATO troops."<sup>206</sup>

Another possible concern for NATO in the area of military and security reform is Ukraine's civil-military relations. According to Mychajlyszyn, in recent history, Ukraine has had a poor record of implementing democratic civil-military relations. She wrote as follows in 2002:

While Ukraine's commitment to peacekeeping is not in doubt, its progress in democratic civil-military relations is a significant priority for its PfP partners and those concerned with PKO [peacekeeping operations] who do

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<sup>204</sup> Natalie Mychajlyszyn, "Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Implications for Domestic and Regional Stability," *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 28, No. 3, Spring 2002, 467.

<sup>205</sup> Roman Kupchinsky, "The State of the Ukrainian Military," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:169, (4 September 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 21 October 2008).

<sup>206</sup> Jan Maksymiuk, "Ukraine: Government faces Uphill Battle in Achieving NATO aspirations," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, 15 November 2005. Available from <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1062966.html> (accessed 6 October 2008).

operate under a system of democratic civilian control...The lack of progress in democratic civil-military reforms threatens stronger coordination of defense planning with NATO and concrete projects in defense planning and training exercises. It also weakens Ukraine's reliability as a partner and a potential member of the alliance.<sup>207</sup>

After the 2006 NATO Riga Summit, some NATO members believed that Ukraine needed to make further efforts to professionalize its armed forces and reform its security sector prior to obtaining NATO membership.<sup>208</sup> Also, "Before the January 2008 letter by Ukraine's top three leaders, U.S. officials warned...that Ukraine must continue defense reforms."<sup>209</sup> Military and security reform issues were not mentioned as prominent limiting factors for a Ukrainian MAP after the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit. Nevertheless, Ukrainian military and security reform efforts will most likely be considered in December 2008 at the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting, and any stagnation in progress may negatively affect Ukraine's MAP application.

## **B. POSSIBLE RUSSIAN INFLUENCE ON NATO DECISION-MAKING**

As noted in Chapter III, Russian leaders are adamantly opposed to Ukraine gaining NATO membership. As Paul Gallis of the Congressional Research Service has observed, "Russia has viewed the former Soviet republic as lying within its sphere of influence, in which Western countries and institutions should play little role."<sup>210</sup> Furthermore, according to Pifer, "The Russians seek to draw a line between Europe and the former Soviet space. Moscow wants Ukraine and Georgia on the eastern side of that line, and wants neither NATO nor the European Union to cross it."<sup>211</sup> Despite its

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<sup>207</sup> Mychajlyszyn, "Civil-Military Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Implications for Domestic and Regional Stability," 468.

<sup>208</sup> Steven Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL33460, 17 December 2007, 6.

<sup>209</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit*, 24. The "top three leaders" were President Viktor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and Speaker of the Parliament Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

<sup>210</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit*, 25.

<sup>211</sup> Steven Pifer, "South Ossetia Conflict Holds Lessons for Kyiv," *Brookings Institution*, 11 September 2008. Available from: [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0815\\_Ukraine\\_pifer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0815_Ukraine_pifer.aspx) (accessed 11 September 2008).

opposition, Russia is not a member of NATO. Therefore, Russia does not have a veto on decisions made within NATO. According to the Alliance's official Study on NATO Enlargement:

NATO's enlargement must be understood as only one important element of a broad European security architecture that transcends and renders obsolete the idea of "*dividing lines*" in Europe...The Alliance should underline that there can be no question of "*spheres of influence*" in the contemporary Europe...NATO-Russia relations should reflect Russia's significance in European security and be based on reciprocity, mutual respect and confidence...NATO decisions, however, cannot be subject to any veto or droit de regard by a non-member state.<sup>212</sup>

In spite of such concrete statements, Russia may influence the decisions made by some NATO members. Russian influence may in particular affect Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration. As noted previously, David Yost, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, wrote in 1998 that "Ukrainian accession to the Alliance is a distant prospect, because of a general Western reluctance to confront Russia in such a sensitive area."<sup>213</sup> Recent comments by NATO Allies seem to indicate that this situation has not changed.

In April 2008, Francois Fillon, the Prime Minister of France, stated that "France will not give its green light to the entry of Ukraine and Georgia. We are opposed to Georgia and Ukraine's entry because we think that it is not the correct response to the balance of power in Europe, and between Europe and Russia."<sup>214</sup> As noted previously in this chapter, "At the [March 2008] NATO foreign ministers' meeting, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and other European leaders stressed the need for maintaining good relations with Moscow."<sup>215</sup> More recently, in October 2008, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, France's minister for European affairs, stated, "I think that it is not the right time for

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<sup>212</sup> "Study on NATO Enlargement," September 1995, par. 9, 13, 27 (Updated 5 October 2000). Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/enl-9503.htm> (accessed 2 October 2008).

<sup>213</sup> David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 155.

<sup>214</sup> "France opposes Ukraine, Georgia as NATO members," USA Today, 1 April 2008, [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-04-01-france-nato\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-04-01-france-nato_N.htm) (accessed 11 October 2008).

<sup>215</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit*, 25.

membership for Georgia and Ukraine...It is not in the interest of Europe or its relations with Russia.”<sup>216</sup> Furthermore, in October 2008, German Chancellor Angela Merkel held a joint press conference in St. Petersburg, Russia, with Russian President Vladimir Medvedev. In response to a question from the Russian media about the possibility of NATO membership for Ukraine, Merkel made the following statement:

As far as NATO membership for countries in Central and Eastern Europe is concerned, you named Georgia and Ukraine, and Germany’s position in this regard has not changed since the NATO summit in Bucharest. We said then that countries can become NATO members if they wish. As far as the membership action plan itself is concerned, we took the view that the time was not yet ripe for this plan to go into effect.<sup>217</sup>

In addition to such statements from European leaders, other experts have indicated that Ukraine was not offered a MAP at the Bucharest Summit due, in part, to Russian influence. As noted previously in this chapter, according to a study published by the Brookings Institution, “the possible Russian reaction” was one of three reasons cited for Ukraine’s failure to receive a MAP.<sup>218</sup> According to Paul Gallis of the Congressional Research Service, “Key European NATO Allies were reluctant to consider a MAP for Ukraine at Bucharest...in part because they are concerned about damaging relations with Russia.”<sup>219</sup> Furthermore, Steven Pifer stated, “Some will argue that, given Russian opposition, NATO should back away from Membership Action Plans (MAPs) for Ukraine and Georgia.”<sup>220</sup> Karl-Heinz Kamp, research director of the NATO Defense College in Rome, stated that “Russia was not explicitly on the agenda at the NATO summit in Bucharest. But Moscow’s views informed the debates on...NATO enlargement.”<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> “French Minister opposes Georgia, Ukraine entry to NATO,” 23 October 2008. Available from <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1224703922.54> (accessed 23 October 2008).

<sup>217</sup> “Joint Press Conference with Federal Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel following Russian-German Intergovernmental Consultations,” 2 October 2008. Available from <http://kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/10/02/2133> (accessed 14 October 2008).

<sup>218</sup> Pifer, “Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest,” 6 October 2008

<sup>219</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 25.

<sup>220</sup> Pifer, “South Ossetia Conflict Holds Lessons for Kyiv.”

<sup>221</sup> Karl-Heinz Kamp, “Frozen Conflict,” *Internationale Politik*, Summer 2008, 28.

If Russia is not allowed a veto in NATO, then why does Russia seem to have an influence over the decisions made by some members of NATO regarding Ukrainian membership? According to Victor Mauer, the deputy director and head of research at the Center for Security Studies (CSS) in Zurich, Switzerland:

Moscow knows that NATO is a guarantor of security at its western flank and that it benefits from the Alliance's engagement on its weak southern flank in Afghanistan. It is precisely for this reason that Western Europeans are advocating a balancing act that aims to avoid further antagonism after the conflict over sovereignty for Kosovo, without giving the impression that Moscow can dictate NATO's agenda from outside.<sup>222</sup>

In addition, Karl-Heinz Kamp stated that “[T]here continue to be cracks in transatlantic structures [such as NATO] into which Russia might drive a wedge...There is no NATO policy toward Russia that is accepted by all members.”<sup>223</sup> Collective defense and energy dependence are two possible “cracks” that Russia may be able to exploit within NATO.

Regarding collective defense, the NATO Study on Enlargement stated:

[T]he commitment by all Allies to defend one another's territory has proven its value...as an anchor of stability and confidence in Europe. This commitment has helped Allied countries develop powerful and flexible military capabilities, firmly under political control. NATO's reliance on collective defense has ensured that no single Ally is forced to rely upon its own national efforts alone in dealing with basic security challenges. Sharing these benefits with new members can help extend security and stability in Europe.<sup>224</sup>

Also, according to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, an attack on one is considered an attack on all:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence

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<sup>222</sup> Victor Mauer, “Cracks in the Foundations: NATO after the Bucharest Summit,” *CSS Analyses in Security Policy*, Vol. 3, No. 33, May 2008, 2.

<sup>223</sup> Kamp, “Frozen Conflict,” 30.

<sup>224</sup> “Study on NATO Enlargement,” par. 9, September 1995 (Updated 5 October 2000).

recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.<sup>225</sup>

As noted in Chapter III, “On February 14, 2008, in response to a question about possible Ukrainian membership in NATO, President Putin warned that Russia might be forced to take military countermeasures, including aiming missiles at Ukraine, if Kiev hosted foreign bases or joined the U.S. missile defense project.”<sup>226</sup> In August 2008, the Russian military invaded Georgia, a former Soviet republic seeking NATO membership. This prompted Richard Holbrooke, a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, to say that “[Prime Minister] Putin’s next target will be Ukraine.”<sup>227</sup>

The possibility of Russian “military countermeasures” against Ukraine, combined with the Russian invasion of Georgia in August 2008, may play a major role in the Allied decision on whether to offer Ukraine a MAP. In light of these issues, some members of the Alliance may be hesitant to offer Ukraine a MAP and eventual membership. According to George Friedman, chief intelligence officer for Stratfor, a private intelligence company, Germany is one such member:

Germany views...NATO expansion [to Ukraine and Georgia] as simply not in Germany’s interests. First, expanding NATO guarantees to Ukraine and Georgia is meaningless. NATO and the United States don’t have the military means to protect Ukraine or Georgia, and incorporating them into the alliance would not increase European security. From a military standpoint, NATO membership for the two former Soviet republics is an empty gesture, while from a political standpoint, Berlin sees it as designed to irritate the Russians for no clear purpose. Next, were NATO prepared to protect Ukraine and Georgia, all NATO countries including Germany

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<sup>225</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949. Available from: <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm> (accessed 19 October 2008).

<sup>226</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO’s Bucharest Summit*, 25.

<sup>227</sup> Richard Holbrooke quoted on Ukrainian website. “Putin’s Next Target will be Ukraine,” 11 August 2008. Available from: <http://www.unian.net/eng/news/news-266463.html> (accessed 1 September 2008).

would be forced to increase defense expenditures substantially. This is not something that Germany and the rest of NATO want to do.<sup>228</sup>

Furthermore, some experts hold that providing security guarantees for Ukraine vis à vis Russia may pose grave risks to NATO military forces. R. Craig Nation, director of Eurasian and Russian studies at the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, assessed the risks associated with providing such a guarantee as follows:

Meaningful security guarantees for Ukraine can only be provided by NATO, but there will be serious political and operational constraints to any large-scale use of Alliance forces in the Eurasian steppe. Moscow has committed itself to a national military strategy that emphasizes reliance upon tactical nuclear weapons in a phase of conventional weakness. Assertive military commitments in areas immediately contiguous to the Russian border will therefore pose considerable risk. Moscow is willing and able to assert meaningful pressure in close proximity to its frontiers, and in the central European corridor it can be counted upon to do so if vital interests are perceived to be at stake.<sup>229</sup>

Such Russian vital interests could involve Sevastopol, the home of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (RBSF). According to an agreement between Russia and Ukraine, the RBSF will be stationed in Sevastopol until 2017. Some NATO Allies may consider the presence of a Russian naval base on Ukrainian territory a reason not to extend membership to Ukraine. As noted previously, according to Steve Larrabee of the Rand Corporation, “As long as the [Russian] fleet is there [in Sevastopol], there’s little likelihood that NATO would bring Ukraine into the alliance...Most of the [NATO] members would be afraid to bring Ukraine there with the Russian presence on Ukrainian soil.”<sup>230</sup> Another Russian “vital” interest could involve the Russian population located in Crimea. “Estimates of the number of Russian passport holders in the Crime range from a

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<sup>228</sup> George Friedman, “The German Question,” 6 October 2008. Available from: [http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20081006\\_german\\_question](http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20081006_german_question) (accessed 12 October 2008).

<sup>229</sup> R. Craig Nation, *NATO’s Relations with Russia and Ukraine*, (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, June 2000), 18. Available from <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/98-00/nation.pdf> (accessed 28 March 2008).

<sup>230</sup> Larrabee quoted in Svitlana Korenvska, “Crimea’s Port Dispute,” *The Washington Times*, 31 July 2008, p. B1.

low of 6,000 (*Newsweek*, August 23) to 100,000 (*Los Angeles Times*, August 25)."<sup>231</sup> A fear among some Ukrainians is that Russia could use the presence of a significant number of Russian citizens on Ukrainian territory as a pretext for war. "Our Ukraine-Self Defense deputy Volodymyr Stretovych warned that increasing the number of Russian citizens in the Crimea would give Russia, as in Georgia, a pretext to come to the 'defense' of its citizens."<sup>232</sup> It is noteworthy in this regard that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has stated that Russia will protect its citizens "wherever they are."<sup>233</sup>

In addition to Ukraine's energy dependence, which was discussed previously, its economy is heavily dependent on Russia. Russia is Ukraine's top trading partner, accounting for 25.2 percent of Ukraine's imports and 21.7 percent of its exports in 2007.<sup>234</sup> Therefore, Russia has a significant stake and influence in Ukraine's economy. Offering NATO membership to Ukraine could result in Russia negatively exploiting the extensive economic ties between the two countries. In light of such threats, NATO Allies may have to be prepared to provide substantial assistance to Ukraine. Some NATO members may be unwilling to provide such assistance. According to Gallis, "In any case, Russian ability and desire to 'punish' Ukraine politically and economically could exceed the ability and willingness of many NATO states to respond."<sup>235</sup>

The other possible "crack" in NATO that Russia may exploit, in addition to the collective defense guarantee, involves energy dependence. Several European NATO countries rely extensively on Russian natural gas and oil. In 2007, Marshall Goldman, a professor of Russian economics at Wellesley College, described Europe's dependence on Russia as follows:

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<sup>231</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Russian Passports as Moscow's Geopolitical Tool," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:176, (15 September 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 3 October 2008).

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Medvedev quoted in Paul Reynolds, "New Russian world order: the five principles," *BBC News*, 1 September 2008. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7591610.stm> (accessed 5 November 2008).

<sup>234</sup> "The 2007 World Factbook," *Central Intelligence Agency*. Available from <https://www.cia.gov> (accessed 10 September 2008).

<sup>235</sup> Gallis, *Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit*, 26.

Overall, Russia today is the source of about 23 percent of Europe's natural gas imports. There are alternative sources of supply in the North Sea (60 percent of Europe's imports) and Algeria (10 percent of Europe's imports), but production, particularly in the North Sea, is declining and there is virtually no excess capacity that can be called on if the flow from Russia is disrupted. As a consequence, Russian gas supplies are critical to the economic and personal well-being of a surprising number of countries, not only in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, but in a growing number of Western European countries...Russia now has as much influence over natural gas consumers in Europe as the combined membership of OPEC has over users of crude oil; by unabashedly manipulating its gas pipeline monopoly, Russia has become the OPEC of the natural gas world, at least in Europe...Russia has also become an important supplier of petroleum to its neighbors in Europe...Should it choose to, Russia can still exercise significant leverage over its petroleum customers.<sup>236</sup>

The exploitation of energy dependence as a source of geopolitical leverage is consistent with official Russian policy. As noted in Chapter III, "The first paragraph of the official (2003) *Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020* defines the country's fuel and energy complex as an 'instrument for the conduct of internal and external policy', adding that 'the role of the country in world energy markets to a large extent determines its geopolitical influence'."<sup>237</sup>

European dependence on Russian energy is expected to increase over the years. "In one estimate, by 2030 EU countries will import 40 percent of their gas needs from Russia."<sup>238</sup> Furthermore, competition for energy supplies will become a factor, due to the rising consumption throughout Europe. "Forecasters predict that natural gas consumption in the EU will double over the next 25 years, and gas has rapidly become Europe's fuel of choice for power generation."<sup>239</sup> Most EU countries are also members

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<sup>236</sup> Marshall I. Goldman, "The Dog Barks but the Caravan Moves On," *Demokratizatsiya*, Volume 15, Issue 4, 22 September 2007, 365 – 366.

<sup>237</sup> James Sherr, *At the Crossroads or the Precipice? The Fate of Ukraine's Orange Revolution and its Implications for Europe*, (Shrivenham, England: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, March 2006), 6.

<sup>238</sup> Paul Gallis, *NATO and Energy Security*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RS22409, 28 December 2007, 2

<sup>239</sup> Paul Belkin, *The European Union's Energy Security Challenges*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL33636, 30 January 2008, 6.

of NATO. Specific European NATO countries that are heavily dependent on Russian energy include France, Germany and Italy. According to Goldman:

Of all the EU countries, Germany has become the most dependent on Russian natural gas. It imports about 36 billion cubic meters of Russian gas annually. Not only does that constitute a little more than 40 percent of Germany's gas imports, it is a larger quantity than that bought by any other country...Even Italy and France rely on Russia for around 30 percent of their gas...Just as is the case with natural gas, Germany imports over 40 percent of its crude oil from Russia.<sup>240</sup>

Given this dependence, Russia may be able to influence decisions made by European leaders. Specifically, Russia may be able to influence Germany's decision on Ukraine's NATO MAP application. Russian leaders are adamantly opposed to Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration. William Drozdiak, the President of the American Council on Germany in New York City, has described the geopolitical influence Russia may have over Germany's decision-making:

For Germany and other European countries, Russia's role as key supplier of oil and gas makes Putin a vital strategic partner who cannot be ignored or antagonized. German Chancellor Angela Merkel...has tempered her stance and recognized that she has no other choice than to embrace Putin. Germany is Europe's biggest importer of Russian gas, and its dependency on it will rise if Germany carries out plans to phase out its nuclear power plants by 2020.<sup>241</sup>

As noted previously in this chapter, in October 2008, German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that Germany's stance on Ukraine's MAP application had not changed since the April 2008 NATO Bucharest summit. This statement was made in St. Petersburg, Russia, during a joint press conference with Russian president Dmitry Medvedev. George Friedman, the chief intelligence officer for Stratfor, believes Germany's dependence on Russian energy played a role in Merkel's decision. In Friedman's words:

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<sup>240</sup> Goldman, "The Dog Barks but the Caravan Moves On," 365 – 366.

<sup>241</sup> William Drozdiak, "Russia: More Awkward, But Still Indispensable," *European Affairs*, Spring/Summer 2006, 96-97.

In one sense, Merkel's reasons for her stance are simple. Germany is heavily dependent on Russian natural gas. If the supply were cut off, Germany's situation would be desperate — or at least close enough that the distinction would be academic. Russia might decide it could not afford to cut off natural gas exports, but Merkel is dealing with a fundamental German interest, and risking that for Ukrainian or Georgian membership in NATO is not something she is prepared to do.<sup>242</sup>

Furthermore, Italy has been characterized by some as bowing to Russian influence. In reference to Italy's energy dependence on Russia, an unidentified diplomat from a former Soviet satellite reportedly stated that, "Italy is Russia's Trojan horse in Europe."<sup>243</sup>

Some European countries and leaders recognize the growing energy dependence on Russia, and the dangers associated with it. "In a July 2006 speech, Romania's President [Traian] Basescu went so far as to warn that 'Europe's dependence on Russian gas monopoly Gazprom...could be the biggest threat to the region since the former Soviet Union's army.'"<sup>244</sup>

There have been calls for European countries to diversify their energy imports, and become less dependent on Russian supplies. According to Paul Belkin of the Congressional Research Service, "Europe's growing dependence on Russia and Russia's apparent willingness to use its energy resources for political purposes have spurred calls from some member states and the United States for a more cohesive EU-wide strategy to further diversify supply."<sup>245</sup> However, Russia has reacted harshly to any talk of limiting its business in Europe. In 2006, in a meeting with EU Ambassadors, then Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller stated:

It is necessary to note that attempts to limit Gazprom's activities in the European market and politicize questions of gas supply, which in fact are of an entirely economic nature, will not lead to good results...It should not

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<sup>242</sup> Friedman, "The German Question."

<sup>243</sup> Guy Dinmore, "Italy upsets US over Georgia," *Financial Times*, 9 September 2008. Available from <http://www.ft.com> (accessed 10 October 2008).

<sup>244</sup> Basescu quoted in Belkin, *The European Union's Energy Security Challenges*, 13.

<sup>245</sup> Belkin, *The European Union's Energy Security Challenges*, 9.

be forgotten that we [Gazprom] are actively familiarizing ourselves with new markets, such as North America and China.<sup>246</sup>

Despite calls to diversify, and in light of comments such as those made by Alexei Miller, “several [EU] member states have pursued bilateral energy deals with Russia that will increase their dependence on Russia for years to come. Both Germany and Italy, the largest importers of Russian gas, have negotiated long-term deals with Russia to lock in future gas supplies.”<sup>247</sup> Some European nations, specifically Poland and the Baltic states, have criticized these bilateral deals. “They have warned their European colleagues not to make energy deals that will give Russia an undue and possibly dangerous amount of political influence over European decision-making.”<sup>248</sup> Such deals may enable Russia to have a voice in European decision-making in the near future, specifically the decision whether to give Ukraine a NATO MAP. Furthermore, Russian influence on the decision-making of NATO members may extend beyond Europe. According to an article published in *The Economist* in September 2008:

It is not just that European countries blocked the...plan to give Ukraine and Georgia a clear path to potential membership at the alliance’s summit in April. Turkey, the most important NATO member in the Black Sea region, is torn between the competing claims of strategic partnership with America and its strong trading links with Russia (which supplies most of its gas)...Turkey is pushing its own regional initiative.<sup>249</sup>

In sum, Moscow will likely maintain its opposition to Ukrainian membership in NATO. Russian leaders will continue to use zero-sum logic when thinking of an independent Ukraine in NATO. Officially, Russia does not have a veto on NATO member decisions, because it is not a member of NATO. However, unofficially, R. Craig Nation has argued, “NATO’s role in the new Eurasia will be limited by the need to

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<sup>246</sup> Miller quoted in “Russia’s Gazprom Threatens to Halt Gas Supplies to Europe,” *RusEnergy: Russian Oil & Gas Industry News*, 26 April 2006. Available from <http://rusenergy.blogspot.com/2006/04/russias-gazprom-threatens-to-halt-gas.html> (accessed 14 November 2008).

<sup>247</sup> Belkin, *The European Union’s Energy Security Challenges*, 12.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>249</sup> “Cold Comfort,” *The Economist*, Volume 388, Issue 8596, 6 September 2008, 32.

sustain cooperative relations with the Russian Federation.”<sup>250</sup> Some members of NATO may not be prepared to provoke Russia on such a sensitive issue, while some NATO members may be looking after their own energy security.

In conclusion, NATO foreign ministers will review Ukraine’s status in December 2008. They will determine if Ukraine is ready to receive a MAP. They will most likely base their determination on several factors, including Ukraine’s political situation, economic reform, military and security reform, and public opinion polls. The NATO Allies made clear at the Bucharest summit that Ukraine would become a member of NATO. As was noted previously, they stated in the Bucharest Summit Declaration, “We agreed today that these countries [Ukraine and Georgia] will become members of NATO.”<sup>251</sup> However, no timetable was given for this membership. President Yushchenko reportedly remains optimistic about Ukraine’s MAP application and eventual membership in NATO. However, as recently as October 2008, some European leaders indicated that Ukraine will not receive a MAP at the December 2008 meeting of NATO foreign ministers. While Ukraine’s readiness for membership has been cited as a potential limitation, Russian opposition may also be a factor in future decisions on Ukraine’s NATO aspirations. Chapter V offers conclusions on these aspirations.

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<sup>250</sup> R. Craig Nation, “U.S. Interests in the New Eurasia,” (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, November 2007), 18.

<sup>251</sup> Bucharest Summit Declaration, par. 23.

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## V. CONCLUSION

The prospect of Ukrainian membership in NATO is limited by several factors, internal and external to Ukraine. The internal factors within Ukraine include an overall negative public perception of NATO, and a volatile domestic political landscape. The external factors include Russian influence, and the competing views among NATO members. This conclusion reviews these factors, and offers recommendations to improve Ukraine's prospects for a NATO MAP and eventual membership in the Alliance.

Anti-NATO public opinion within Ukraine continues to be one of the main limiting internal factors for its NATO membership aspiration. As recently as May 2008, a public opinion poll conducted by Sofia, a Kyiv-based think tank, showed that only 21.4 percent of the Ukrainians polled support NATO membership for Ukraine. In addition, 53 percent of those polled approved of the decision made by NATO not to offer Ukraine a MAP at the 2008 NATO Bucharest summit.<sup>252</sup> In addition:

The poll identified the main reasons for the negative attitude to NATO membership. Most Ukrainians fear that this would spoil relations with Russia (74 percent of those polled), force them to take part in US-led wars (67 percent), exacerbate tension in society (60 percent), prompt more spending on defense (58 percent), and make Ukraine a target for terrorists (58 percent).<sup>253</sup>

Furthermore, the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) conducted a poll in August and September 2008, in which Ukrainian citizens were asked which military security option would be the best for Ukraine. "While only 17.4 percent said joining NATO, 28.3 percent chose 'joining a military union with Russia' (25 percent opted for not joining any bloc and 10.8 percent for a new EU-member-only system of collective security)."<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Pavel Korduban, "Will NATO become Popular among Ukrainians?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:111, (11 June 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 23 October 2008).

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Jeremy Druker, "While the Georgia-Russia conflict has played a role in dashing Ukraine's hopes for NATO membership, so has very dramatic political turmoil," ISN Security Watch, 20 October 2008. Available from <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/current-affairs/security-watch/detail/?ots591=4888CAAO-B3DB-1461-98B9-E20E7B9C13D4&lng=en&id=92919> (accessed 20 October 2008).

There is another disturbing trend for Ukrainian NATO proponents. Not only is Ukrainian support for NATO membership geographically based, as noted in Chapter II, but noteworthy proportions of the opposition to NATO membership appear to be from the younger generation within Ukraine. In August 2008, the Taylor Nelson Sofrez Ukraine agency conducted a public opinion poll of 1,200 Ukrainians. “Overall, 63 percent of those polled by Taylor Nelson were opposed to Ukraine joining NATO. Only 3.3 percent were undecided. Some 65 percent of NATO opponents were 60 or more years old.”<sup>255</sup> However, when younger respondents (18-19 years old) were asked their opinion of NATO, “only 23 percent in this age group agreed that Ukraine should join the Alliance.”<sup>256</sup>

Therefore, increasing public support for Ukrainian membership in NATO will require a plan that addresses various elements of the population. Also, the plan should address the fears expressed by Ukrainians about NATO membership, as noted in the polls. The Ukrainian government, with NATO assistance, has developed a plan to improve Ukrainian public opinion of NATO. As noted previously, Article 4 of the 2006 NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan instituted various statewide programs, conferences, and workshops to educate the public on the purposes of NATO. Furthermore, the Target Plan instituted semi-annual polling to determine common misperceptions of NATO, and called for recommendations designed to address these misperceptions. In addition to this plan, the Ukrainian government approved another public awareness campaign in May 2008 to improve NATO’s image. According to Pavel Korduban:

On May 28 the Ukrainian government approved a four-year, \$6 million public awareness plan aimed at winning majority support among the population for NATO accession. According to the plan, public support for NATO entry should grow to 36 percent by the end of 2008 and further to 43 percent in 2009, 50 percent in 2010, and 55 percent by 2011. The plan provides for a set of measures ranging from establishing a network of NATO information offices across the country to printing posters, calendars and brochures; launching mandatory NATO awareness courses

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<sup>255</sup> Roman Kupchinsky, “Surprising and Contradictory Opinions on the Ukrainian Streets,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5:173, (10 September 2008). Available from <http://www.jamestown.org/edm> (accessed 2 October 2008).

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

at schools; organizing soccer matches between teams from Ukraine and NATO member states; and inviting DJs [disc jockeys] from NATO countries to Ukrainian nightclubs. The nationwide pro-NATO campaign started with an event featuring pop stars in Ukraina Palace in downtown Kyiv...[Furthermore] the NU [Yushchenko's political party] organized pro-NATO rallies in the southern cities of Odessa, Mykolaiv, Sevastopol, and Simferopol.<sup>257</sup>

Therefore, the Yushchenko government is dedicating substantial resources to combat misperceptions about NATO among the Ukrainian population, across the geographical and generational spheres. However, in addition to improving public awareness and combating misperceptions of NATO, the Yushchenko government should emphasize the benefits that ongoing cooperation with NATO has already brought to Ukraine, along with the potential benefits that Ukraine would gain from membership in NATO. Perepelytsia provided some specific examples of ongoing cooperation:

Since 1994, NATO and individual Allies have provided professional military training to some 8,500 Ukrainian officers. Moreover, between 2001 and 2006, NATO has supported the retraining of over 3,000 retired Ukrainian military personnel to help their transition to civilian life. Since 2006, new professional courses have been launched for former military personnel in Kirovohrad, Melitopol, Chernihiv and Lviv. And language courses are ongoing in Odessa, Kyiv and Simferopol.<sup>258</sup>

Furthermore, Perepelytsia pointed out that the Ukrainian government could highlight the various demilitarization projects ongoing in Ukraine, through the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund. As noted previously, these projects include efforts to reduce and eliminate huge stockpiles of obsolete and surplus munitions that pose a risk to the population.<sup>259</sup> In addition, John Kriendler has noted some potential benefits that the Ukraine government could highlight. According to Kriendler:

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<sup>257</sup> Korduban, "Will NATO become Popular among Ukrainians?"

<sup>258</sup> Grigoriy M. Perepelytsia, "NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads," *Military Technology*, Vol. 32, Issue 1, January 2008, 242.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., 242.

Key benefits would include, collective defence guarantees, defence at lower cost, participation in cooperative security arrangements, decision making in NATO, impetus to reform, seeking EU membership, strengthening Ukraine's position vis-à-vis Russia and increased economic growth and foreign direct investment.<sup>260</sup>

Highlighting the potential benefits, along with the benefits received from ongoing cooperation with NATO, might increase public support for Alliance membership throughout Ukraine and help transform common stereotypes and misperceptions. This would represent success for the plans instituted by the Yushchenko government to educate the Ukrainian population about NATO.

However, political uncertainties in Ukraine may undermine efforts to improve public understanding of NATO, and ultimately may hinder Ukraine's efforts to join NATO. As noted in Chapter IV, Yushchenko's popularity is in significant decline among Ukrainians. An October 2008 poll in Ukraine confirmed Yushchenko's loss of legitimacy among the Ukrainian people:

According to the results of a recent sociological poll, which was conducted by the "Ukrainian Democratic Kolo" for the Institute of Politics, Ukrainians have less confidence in their president Viktor Yushchenko than in other politicians. Only 13.6 percent of citizens trust the president, while 70.5 percent do not. V. Yushchenko has the worst balance between confidence and lack of confidence – equaling 59 percent<sup>261</sup>

Furthermore, political infighting regarding NATO membership has hindered the pursuit of Ukraine's NATO aspiration. President Yushchenko has been seeking NATO membership for Ukraine since his election in 2004. However, there are influential political leaders that do not agree with him. Former Prime Minister Yanukovych is not a proponent of NATO membership, particularly without holding a public referendum that approves of it. Yanukovych is the leader of the Party of Regions (PR). Prior to Yushchenko's dismissal of the Ukrainian parliament in October 2008, the PR held the

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<sup>260</sup> John Kriendler, *Ukrainian Membership in NATO: Benefits, Costs, Misconceptions and Urban Legends*, 1.

<sup>261</sup> Igor Vlasov, "On Different Sides of the Barricades," *Voyenno-Promyshlenny Kuryer*, 15 October 2008, in FBIS, CEP20081016548021.

largest number of seats. With parliamentary elections slated for December 2008, the PR is in a position to gain even more seats in the Ukrainian parliament, giving the party more leverage over Ukraine's NATO aspiration. Without the support of Yanukovych and his party, the quest for NATO membership for Ukraine will continue to be problematic. According to Taras Kuzio:

Without the PR supporting Ukraine's NATO membership, it would be difficult for Ukraine to join NATO, as the PR dominates eastern-southern Ukraine, where NATO membership is most unpopular.<sup>262</sup>

Furthermore, policy disagreements between President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko have hampered Ukraine's efforts to join NATO. Infighting over domestic and international issues is conveying the impression to the Ukrainian people, and to NATO, that Ukraine is politically unstable. Critical observers maintain that the dissolution of the Ukrainian parliament in October 2008 has further eroded democracy in Ukraine.

In summation, NATO membership will probably remain a highly politicized issue in Ukraine for years to come. If Ukraine is to be considered for NATO membership, the political infighting should be resolved. According to Steven Pifer, "Ukraine is weaker, not just on securing a MAP but on a whole range of questions, when the president and prime minister are undermining each other. The current turmoil and immature politics create for some a justification to say that Ukraine is not ready for a MAP."<sup>263</sup> A unified Ukrainian government and the domestic political will to move forward with NATO membership would be key additions to Ukraine's NATO membership portfolio. Anatoliy Grytsenko, then Defense Minister, stressed this point in 2006:

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<sup>262</sup> Taras Kuzio, "The Orange Revolution at the Crossroads," *Demokratizatsiya*, Fall 2006, 490.

<sup>263</sup> Steven Pifer, "Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest," *Brookings Institution*, October 2008. Available from [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0506\\_ukraine\\_pifer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0506_ukraine_pifer.aspx) (accessed 5 October 2008).

Ukraine has not lost its chance to move forward and join the Alliance...How long it will take, depends, first of all, on the level of coordination of our authorities. Second, it depends on our desire to build a country that meets NATO standards. And third, it depends on the will and determination of key political players in our country to support NATO accession.<sup>264</sup>

Russian influence is an external factor limiting the prospects for Ukraine's NATO aspiration. Historically, Russian policies have subjugated Ukraine in the political, social and economic realms. These subjugation tendencies have influenced some Ukrainians to seek integration with the West, through institutions such as NATO. However, Russia's leaders believe that Ukraine lies within its sphere of influence, and adamantly oppose NATO membership. Furthermore, Russia still has the leverage to influence decision-making on Ukraine's NATO aspiration with social, political and economic resources.

Ukraine should develop measures to counter any Russian attempts to influence its foreign policy. Steven Pifer has offered recommendations on how Ukraine can achieve this. In addition to the Ukrainian government pursuing a coherent and consistent foreign policy, and conducting public education campaigns on NATO, Pifer concluded that:

[T]he government should reduce vulnerabilities to Russian pressure. This means paying energy debts on time, so that Moscow has no pretext for reducing the flow of gas. It means energy conservation and developing domestic gas and oil resources in order to enhance Ukraine's energy security. And it means managing the gas transit system in an open and transparent manner. A Ukraine that strengthens its own energy-security situation and serves as a reliable and transparent transporter of energy to Europe will reduce its exposure to Russian energy pressures and can become an indispensable part of Europe's energy future...Russia has exploited the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to destabilize Georgia. While the Georgian and Ukrainian situations are different, the Ukrainian government should keep a close watch to make sure Russia does not use the language or ethnic issues to create pressure points, especially in Crimea. One potential pressure point is the Black Sea Fleet. Ukraine has the right, as a sovereign country, to insist on the fleet's departure when the current basing agreement lapses in 2017 and to address

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<sup>264</sup> Grytsenko quoted in Perepelytsia, "NATO and Ukraine: At the Crossroads," 242.

with Moscow the activities of warships operating from Ukrainian ports. But perhaps now may not be the time to try to accelerate negotiations on the fleet's departure. Ukraine can be pro-European and still try to maintain good relations with Russia.<sup>265</sup>

Ukraine is actively pursuing nuclear power as a step towards energy independence from Russia. The government has located significant uranium ore deposits in Ukraine, which will fuel nuclear power plants. Ukraine may have enough uranium ore deposits to satisfy 100 percent of its nuclear power needs. According to Prime Minister Tymoshenko, uranium ore extraction is the beginning of the country's autonomous nuclear-fuel cycle.<sup>266</sup> In her words, "This will guarantee energy independence of the state."<sup>267</sup> However, the transition from natural gas to nuclear power will require several years. Therefore, Ukraine will continue to rely on Russian natural gas imports for years to come. Furthermore, Ukraine is heavily reliant on Russia in other areas of the economy. As noted previously, Russia is Ukraine's top trading partner, accounting for 25.2 percent of Ukraine's imports and 21.7 percent of its exports in 2007.<sup>268</sup> Russia may attempt to use energy and economic interdependence as a tool to influence Ukrainian politics and Ukrainian foreign policy in the near future.

Regarding Crimea, the Russian Black Sea Fleet and the numerous Russian passport holders there will ensure the region's explosive nature for years to come. Keeping a close eye on Crimea, as Pifer has recommended, will not stop Russian leaders from exploiting the volatility of this region. In May 2008, Yuri Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow, flew to Crimea to give a speech. Luzhkov, along with many other Russian leaders and citizens, believes that Crimea belongs to Russia. "He proclaimed in a speech that Sevastopol, the site of the Russian naval base, belongs to Russia. 'Is it right for us to

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<sup>265</sup> Steven Pifer, "South Ossetia Conflict Holds Lessons for Kyiv," *Brookings Institution*, 11 September 2008. Available from: [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0815\\_Ukraine\\_pifer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0815_Ukraine_pifer.aspx) (accessed 11 September 2008).

<sup>266</sup> Government of Ukraine, "Yulia Tymoshenko: Initiating uranium ore extraction is a step toward energy independence," *Web Portal of Ukrainian Government*, Available from [http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art\\_id=154717874](http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=154717874) (accessed 28 August 2008).

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> "The 2007 CIA World Factbook," *Central Intelligence Agency*, Available from <https://www.cia.gov> (accessed 14 October 2008).

keep silent?’ he said. ‘We are speaking the truth.’”<sup>269</sup> In addition, “In Sevastopol...Mr. Luzhkov has deepened the Russian presence. He has constructed a branch of Moscow State University, Russian Orthodox cathedrals, schools, a sports complex and other facilities.”<sup>270</sup> Luzhkov has also donated money for the construction of military housing for Russian military members stationed in Sevastopol.

Therefore, Ukraine can expect Russia to continue to use social, economic and political pressure to influence the prospects for its NATO membership aspiration. As Pifer recommended, the Ukrainian government should attempt to maintain good relations with its Russian neighbor. In regard to NATO, “For its part, the Ukrainian government should continue to make clear to Moscow that its motivation for seeking to draw closer to NATO is Euro-Atlantic integration, not anti-Russian [sentiment].”<sup>271</sup> However, Ukraine does not have to appease Russia by bowing to its anti-NATO pressure. Ukraine is a sovereign country, with a right to choose its own foreign policy. It is ultimately up to the Ukrainian leaders and citizens to choose whether to resist and overcome any Russian anti-NATO influence. In the words of Pifer:

Russia is playing a serious game with regard to the former Soviet space. Kyiv needs to respond with equal seriousness. A serious Ukrainian response—a coherent government, growing public support for a pro-European course, and addressing vulnerabilities in the Ukraine-Russia relationship – will strengthen Ukraine’s ability to withstand Russian pressure. It likewise will have a positive effect on how the West and Euro-Atlantic institutions view Ukraine and its pro-European course.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Luzhkov quoted in Clifford J. Levy, “Mayor of Moscow Exports Russia’s New Nationalism,” *International Herald Tribune*, 26 October 2008. Available from <http://www.iht.com/bin/printfriendly.php?id=17242346> (accessed November 2008).

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Steven Pifer, “Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest,” *Brookings Institution*, 6 October 2008. Available from [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0506\\_ukraine\\_pifer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0506_ukraine_pifer.aspx) (accessed 5 October 2008).

<sup>272</sup> Pifer, “South Ossetia Conflict Holds Lessons for Kyiv.”

This leads to the other external factor limiting the prospects for Ukraine's NATO membership aspiration: the possible decisions of the NATO Allies. Some members of NATO do not believe that Ukraine is ready for a MAP, while others evidently do not wish to damage relations with Russia.

To determine Ukraine's readiness, reforms within the political, social, military, and security areas will be analyzed in December 2008 by the NATO foreign ministers. In particular, public opinion polls and political developments within and beyond Ukraine have received much attention from NATO officials and members.

Public opinion polls within Ukraine have been, and continue to be, an important issue within NATO regarding Ukraine's membership aspiration. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO, has stressed the importance that NATO places on Ukrainian public opinion. In 2005, he stated, “[I]t will ultimately be up to you, the people of Ukraine, and her current and future leaders, to carry this conversation forward. Because the fundamental decisions about Ukraine's future are decisions that you will have to take.”<sup>273</sup> In February 2008, he made the following statements: “Ukraine and the Ukrainian people...at a certain stage, decide if they want NATO, because as we know, in Ukrainian public opinion there's still something to be done...to increase public support for NATO.”<sup>274</sup> Misperceptions of NATO within Ukraine will require time to change. Anti-NATO public opinion polls will most likely remain unchanged in the near future, and may limit Ukraine's readiness for membership in the eyes of some NATO members. Therefore, proponents of NATO membership in Ukraine should remain patient, and trust that the various public awareness campaigns will address Ukrainian misperceptions of NATO.

Ukrainian political uncertainty has also received high visibility within NATO, and it may affect judgments about Ukraine's readiness for membership. According to Steven Pifer:

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<sup>273</sup> Speech by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, “Achieving Ukraine's integration goals: What needs to be done,” 20 October 2005. Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s051020b.htm> (accessed 4 November 2008).

<sup>274</sup> “Press conference with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer,” 7 February 2008. Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080207h.html> (accessed 4 November 2008).

Political turmoil in Ukraine complicates Kyiv's bid. President Yushchenko in October [2008] dissolved the parliament and has called for pre-term parliamentary elections. While Prime Minister Tymoshenko opposes elections, the odds are that, when NATO foreign ministers meet December 2-3 [2008], Ukraine will be in the run-up to elections. That means that NATO ministers will not know who will be the next prime minister, let alone whether he or she will support Yushchenko's desire for a MAP.<sup>275</sup>

Andrew Wilson, an expert on Ukrainian affairs at the European Council for Foreign Relations, also discussed the possible impact of Ukraine's political situation on NATO's view of Ukraine's readiness for membership:

Andrew Wilson...put the likelihood of a MAP invitation in December [2008] at virtually nil. "There is a slight chance that some NATO members would offer Yushchenko something for domestic political purposes"...But with the president's political numbers running so low, Wilson thought NATO leaders would probably find it inadvisable to bet on the president in such a manner.<sup>276</sup>

Ongoing political uncertainty within Ukraine may be cited to justify a decision by the Allies not to offer Ukraine a MAP in December 2008. Therefore, for NATO membership to become a realistic possibility, the Ukrainian government's leaders should end their infighting and become more unified. According to Pifer:

First and foremost, it is not the time for a divided government. President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko must end their infighting and together pursue a coherent policy. The government should also talk to the Party of Regions. Leaders of that party may one day be back in power. They should share the government's interest in protecting Ukraine's right to set its own foreign-policy course.<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Steven Pifer, "Ukraine, Georgia and MAP – Time for Plan B," *Brookings Institution*, 4 November 2008. Available from [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/1029\\_nato\\_pifer.aspx?p=1](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/1029_nato_pifer.aspx?p=1) (accessed 5 November 2008).

<sup>276</sup> Andrew Wilson quoted in Druker, "While the Georgia-Russia conflict has played a role in dashing Ukraine's hopes for NATO membership, so has very dramatic political turmoil," ISN Security Watch, 20 October 2008.

<sup>277</sup> Pifer, "South Ossetia Conflict Holds Lessons for Kyiv."

Russian pressures may also influence the decision making of some NATO members. Officially, Russia does not have a veto on any decision made by NATO, because Russia is not a member of the Alliance. The *Study on NATO Enlargement* specifically states that “NATO’s decisions...cannot be subject to any veto or droit de regard by a non-member state.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer confirmed this at a February 2008 NATO-Ukraine Commission press conference. In response to a question about Russian influence on NATO enlargement, he stated firmly, “NATO decisions are taken by the allies.”<sup>279</sup>

However, in spite of the fact that Russia is not officially allowed a vote in NATO decision-making, Russia may attempt to influence the decisions made by NATO members. If Ukraine was offered NATO membership, significant economic and security guarantees might be required to protect Ukraine against Russian “countermeasures.” The costs and risks associated with these guarantees may deter some countries from approving Ukraine’s NATO bid. Furthermore, European energy dependence on Russia may also affect NATO decision making. Several European countries import significant amounts of Russian natural gas and oil. Additionally, Germany and other European NATO countries have struck long-term, bilateral energy deals with Russia. According to *The Economist*, such deals pose risks for NATO decision-making:

As long as governments like Germany’s prefer to cut separate deals with Russia, Europe’s inevitable dependence on Russian oil and gas will always offer a tempting way for an opportunistic Kremlin to exert pressure on this country or that, by turning off the taps.<sup>280</sup>

These factors may enable Russia to have a voice in NATO decision-making for years to come, including the decision on whether to give Ukraine a MAP. France’s Prime Minister, Francois Fillon, confirmed this view when he stated in April 2008 that, “France will not give its green light to the entry of Ukraine and Georgia. We are opposed to Georgia and Ukraine’s entry because we think that it is not the correct response to the

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<sup>278</sup> “Study on NATO Enlargement,” September 1995, par. 27 (Updated 5 October 2000). Available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/enl-9503.htm> (accessed 2 October 2008).

<sup>279</sup> “Press conference with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer,” 7 February 2008.

<sup>280</sup> “Europe Stands up to Russia,” *The Economist*, Volume 388, Number 8596, 6 September 2008, 11.

balance of power in Europe, and between Europe and Russia.”<sup>281</sup> Apparently, the balance of power is now a consideration in determining the status of a country’s NATO bid. NATO should take into account Russian views, but allowing Russia to influence the Alliance’s decision-making would be a mistake. According to Pifer:

While the Alliance should not ignore Russian views, concern in Russia should not mean compromising another nation’s aspiration to associate with an alliance of shared values that promotes stability and security throughout Europe. It would be a mistake to allow Russia a veto over the extension of MAPs to Ukraine and Georgia. To do so would be to accept a new dividing line between Europe and the former Soviet space. It would deny the opportunity to tens of millions to become full members of the Euro-Atlantic community. And it would encourage those in Russia who wish to reassert a Russian-led post-Soviet bloc rather than develop a relationship of cooperation and full partnership with Europe and the West. These effects would not be in the interest of the United States, of the Alliance or, ultimately, of Russia.<sup>282</sup>

In conclusion, despite the Russian issue within NATO, Ukraine should focus on what it has control of. It should resolve its political uncertainties and continue with its NATO education campaign to improve the public’s opinion of the Alliance. Further reform efforts in the economic, political, military, and security realms should continue in cooperation with NATO. According to the NATO Secretary General:

Do not forget that this process is performance-driven. It is driven by performance. It is driven by reforms, as we are discussing at the moment...Ukraine is an important country and NATO takes the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine very seriously indeed.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> “France opposes Ukraine, Georgia as NATO members,” *USA Today*, 1 April 2008, [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-04-01-france-nato\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-04-01-france-nato_N.htm) (accessed 11 October 2008).

<sup>282</sup> Steven Pifer, “Statement before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Ukraine and NATO at the Bucharest Summit,” 4 March, 2008. Available from [http://www.csis.org/media/congress/ts\\_080303\\_pifer.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/congress/ts_080303_pifer.pdf) (accessed 14 October 2008).

<sup>283</sup> “Press conference with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer,” 7 February 2008.

Therefore, as Pifer has suggested, “Ukraine’s representative in Brussels should ask NATO ambassadors to state exactly what the outstanding questions are, and Kyiv should then address them as a matter of priority.”<sup>284</sup> Ukraine should continue to address any shortcomings or concerns that may encourage NATO members to postpone decisions on its MAP application and quest for NATO membership. In the end, NATO membership is ultimately up to the Ukrainian people and their leaders.

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<sup>284</sup> Pifer, “Ukraine and NATO Following Bucharest.”

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